FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

Daily Report

Latin America

FBIS-LAT-88-084
Monday
2 May 1988

Daily Report
Latin America

FBIS-LAT-88-084 *2 May 1988*

CONTENTS

INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

Group of 8 on Temporary Suspension of Panama *[AFP]* 1
22d Session of ECLA Concludes in Rio *[Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO 28 Apr]* 1
Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay Reach Drug Accord *[EFE]* 1

CARIBBEAN

Cuba

Activities for May Day Celebration Reported 2
Foreign Delegations Arrive 2
Castro Presides Over Parade 2
Veiga Gives May Day Speech 3
Risquet Meets Angolan, Leaves for London Talks 4
Attorney General on Penal Code, Releases 5
Castro Participates in Planning Meeting Debates 5
Castro, Soviet Scientist Open Health Centers 5
Emergency Center Inaugurated 6
Eye Surgery Center Opened 6
Medical Projects Discussed 6

Dominican Republic

Balaguer Suspends Certain Imports for 1 Year 7

Haiti

Manigat on National Reconciliation Policy *[LE PROGRESSISTE HAITIEN 28 Apr]* 7
Violence Begins After Manigat Warns Duvalierists 8
People's Movement Called To Achieve Solidarity 8
Workers Federation Questions Court Procedures 9
Uneasiness Reported Among Peasants in Northwest 9

Jamaica

Seaga, Soviet Officials Discuss Bauxite Exports 9
Further on Soviets' Visit 10

Trinidad and Tobago

New Theories on Causes of Army Bunker Explosion 10

CENTRAL AMERICA

El Salvador

PDC Nominates Rey Prendes for President 11

Honduras

Azcona on Economy, U.S. Embassy Damage 11

Nicaragua

Government, RN Continue Meeting in Managua 12
Tinoco on Proposal 12
Bermudez Denies RN Division 18
Ferrey Rejects Extension 19
Calero on Concessions *[AFP]* 19
Joint Commission Formed 20
H. Ortega on Outcome 20
President Ortega Delivers Labor Day Speech 25
D'Escoto Denies Incursions; Accuses Honduras 27

Panama

Madrid: 'Agreement' on Noriega Resignation 28
Noriega Says No Negotiations Held With Kozak 28
PRD President Comments *[DPA]* 28
Noriega Addresses Labor Solidarity Convention 29
Solis Palma Comments on 'Criminal Aggression' 31
Foreign Minister on Situation, Policies 33
Arias Calderon: Noriega Exile Obligatory *[Buenos Aires REUTER]* 38
On 'Solution' *[AFP]* 39

Group of 8 on Temporary Suspension of Panama

PA2904204788 Paris AFP in Spanish 0255 GMT 29 Apr 88

[Text] Caracas, 28 Apr (AFP)—Venezuelan Foreign Minister German Nava Carrillo said today that as long as the current situation in Panama prevails, Panama will not be represented in the Group of Eight.

"We feel that the decision adopted in Cartagena (to temporarily remove Panama from the group) is in force," Nava reiterated.

The Group of Eight is composed of the four Contadora Group countries (Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela) and its Support Group (Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Uruguay), and Panama was separated 1 day after President Eric Delvalle's fall.

Meanwhile, the Venezuelan foreign minister said that President Jaime Lusinchi "is still willing" to attend the Group of Eight conference scheduled to take place in November in Montevideo.

Prior to the presidential summit a preparatory meeting will be held in Mexico in June, at which "some topics will be added," Nava said, without offering further details.

22d Session of ECLA Concludes in Rio

PY290402 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 28 Apr 88 p A-38

[Excerpts] The 22d ECLA meeting ended yesterday in Rio de Janeiro. During the closing ceremony, Foreign Ministry Secretary General Paulo Tarso Flecha de Lima delivered a speech on "ECLA's Next 40 Years," mentioning that the commission was celebrating its 40th anniversary. [passage omitted]

Interviews with Mexican Programming and Budget Secretary Pedro Aspe Armella, Chilean National Planning Office Director Sergio Melnick, and Argentine Planning Secretary Bernardo Grinspun showed that Latin America has decided to adopt orthodox solutions to its economic problems. After implementing unorthodox and disastrous plans, such as Argentina's Austral Plan, the governments have adopted a rigid monetary policy, market freedom, and reduced intervention of the state in the economy with certain variations according to each country's particular circumstances. Brazil is following a completely different pattern from what ECLA advocated in the 1950's. [passage omitted]

The conclusion of the meeting was marked by a formal discussion between representatives of Brazil and the United States as to how the meeting should be closed. The final document was full of rhetorical passages condemning economic measures that inhibit free trade.

This document, which was approved by a 23-to-5 vote with 4 abstentions, also refers to the currency blockade against Panama by U.S. banks as a result of the situation involving General Noriega. However, at no point does the document refer to Panama itself or to its conflict.

Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay Reach Drug Accord

PY010350 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0229 GMT 1 May 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 30 Apr (EFE)—Today the governments of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay decided "to consolidate the mechanisms of consultation and coordination" for the joint repression of drug trafficking.

The agreement was signed by Argentine Interior Minister Enrique Nosiglia, Uruguayan Interior Minister Antonio Marchesano, and Brazilian Justice Minister Paulo Brossard de Souza during a meeting held in Buenos Aires.

The three ministers signed a "note of understanding" by which their governments pledge to hold joint meetings every 6 months to coordinate their action against drug trafficking "especially in their border areas."

Argentine Government sources told EFE that "President Raul Alfonsin is concerned with the increased drug trafficking in the areas of our country bordering Paraguay and Brazil."

The sources said that "the boom of car-contraband toward Paraguay," which used to be paid with marijuana in that country, is now "paid with cocaine."

Sources close to the Brazilian delegation told EFE that in the last few months authorities in Parana State seized important amounts of drugs entering Brazil in exchange for new Brazilian-made cars.

Cuba

Activities for May Day Celebration Reported

Foreign Delegations Arrive

FL2904214088 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 28 Apr 88

[Text] Our working people are getting ready to celebrate with great enthusiasm International Workers Day on Sunday, 1 May. Delegations from various countries have begun arriving to celebrate with us.

The Soviet delegation arrived, headed by (Nikolay Trikober), president of the Central Council of Trade Unions of (Orlov) Province [as heard]. (Nina Motova), work heroine and deputy of the USSR Supreme Soviet, is also a member of the delegation.

In addition to the Soviet delegation, Jesus Escandel, secretary of the CTC [Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions], welcomed Husayn al-'Abid, member of the general secretariat and person responsible for cultural affairs and activities relating to workers of the Palestinian Workers' Union; Felix Diaz Clavijo, member of the international plenary of the Central Organization of Uruguayan Workers; and Jorge Catania, member of the national directorate of Argentina's Agustin Tosco groups.

Castro Presides Over Parade

FL0105171088 [Editorial Report] Havana Television Service in Spanish at 1255 GMT on 1 May begins live coverage from Havana's Revolution Square of the May Day parade marking the International Workers Day.

The establishing shot shows Cuban President Fidel Castro at the head of the group of people who are walking toward the platform. The camera shows Roberto Veiga, secretary general of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions, CTC, walking to the left of Castro. Jorge Lezcano, first party secretary of Havana City Province, is walking on Castro's right.

Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish joins Cuban television coverage of the May Day parade at 1258 GMT. It remains in network with television until Veiga ends his speech at 1319 GMT. At that time, Havana Television Service continues its 2-hour coverage of the parade while Radio Rebelde returns to its regular programming. However Radio Rebelde's mobile units occasionally return to Revolution Square for an update on the progress of the parade.

Roberto Veiga begins to speak at 1303 GMT and concludes his remarks at 1319 GMT, having spoken for 16 minutes. The workers begin marching immediately after Veiga's speech. Among the placards that can be seen are the slogans: "There is no obstacle that can hold us back!" "Transforming the capital with the efforts of all!" "Long live the eternal friendship between Cuba and the USSR!"

Castro is shown standing during the entire parade with Veiga on his left and Lezcano on his right. The workers pass the platform in three columns according to municipality, says the announcer. As the workers pass, the camera gives a close-up shot of the placards and banners identifying their trade union and municipality.

Television coverage of the Havana parade is occasionally interrupted with live reports on the festivities in other provinces.

At 1346 GMT, Cuban television carries a live 5-minute report of the May Day parade in Santiago de Cuba.

Coverage then goes to Holguin Province for a 5-minute report on their parade. The announcer reports that the workers of Holguin presented Jose Ramirez Cruz, alternate member of the PCC Politburo, with a check for 1,005,876 pesos for the Territorial Troops Militia, MTT.

At 1421 GMT, Cuban television carries a live 4-minute report on the May Day parade in Santa Clara, Villa Clara Province. The announcer reports that the festivities are presided over by Tomas Cardenas Garcia, first party secretary of Villa Clara, and Pedro Miret Prieto, member of the PCC Politburo.

The cameras return to Havana at 1426 GMT. However, there is a 2-second break in transmission at 1427 GMT and May Day parade coverage resumes from Villa Clara. Some of the slogans on the placards here include: "We are advancing on the correct road toward new victories for the fatherland and for socialism!" "The fight for peace is the fight for life!"

The cameras return to Havana at 1435 GMT. The announcer reports that the break in transmission from Havana was due to a minor electrical problem.

At 1445 GMT, the announcer says that it has begun to rain but the people are continuing their march. The camera shows that the streets are now wet and some people are covering their heads.

The parade ends with the FAR units marching in formation. The announcer notes that they are keeping their precise formation despite the rain. The camera first shows the FAR members in uniform, carrying rifles, and wearing helmets as they pass in review in front of the platform. They are followed by a women's unit of the MTT.

Television coverage of the parade ends at 1502 GMT with a close-up shot of Castro waving to the crowd and then leaving the platform area. The following caption appears on the screen: "Workers of the world, unite!"

Veiga Gives May Day Speech

FL0105155088 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1303 GMT 1 May 88

[Speech by Roberto Veiga, secretary general of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions, marking 1 May, International Workers Day, from Havana's Revolution Square—live]

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, comrades presiding over this event, distinguished guests, comrades: Once again in this historic place, the combatant people will show their strength, dignity, and consciousness.

This parade will begin with the construction workers of some of the most outstanding construction contingents of Havana and of tens of thousands of mini-brigades. [applause] They confirm how integrity, honor, and principles are capable of unleashing the new and exemplary work spirit which is making its way through the entire country. They are showing the fruits that can be harvested when creative and revolutionary formulas are applied in solving development problems. They symbolize the dedicated work of hundreds of thousands of compatriots who have participated in the transformation of our capital.

We are accompanied by representatives of cane cutter contingents from the provinces of Havana who have cut millions of arrobas of cane. They show with their presence the extraordinary work performed by all Cuban sugar industry workers who, despite the adverse weather conditions, are about to end a sugar harvest that will be considered a model for future seasons because of its results. The country has just completed the sugar production plan of the current season. [applause] Good progress is also being reported in planting and especially in the manual weeding and irrigation of sugarcane fields. This is undeniable progress compared to previous years.

We will watch an impressive show of people who will march with confidence in their future and pleased by arriving at this 1 May, giving a vigorous boost to the process of rectification of mistakes and struggle against negative tendencies called for by the party and Comrade Fidel. This justified optimism is incompatible with any expression of excesive feelings of triumph and self-indulgence. We all have the belief that what we have done already teaches us how much we can still do, that hard and difficult years lie ahead, and many problems and deficiencies are yet to be solved and eliminated. This is why, on this 1 May, our people will reaffirm their commitment to continue to struggle in maximizing the work day, to increase savings of material and human resources, to improve the quality of production and services, to reduce costs, to increase productivity, in sum, to achieve more efficiency. On this day our workers will ratify their determination to continue revitalizing voluntary work, which is sensible and necessary, to combat resolutely everything that is done wrong, and to transfer to other places the experiences of some enterprises and units aimed at improving the organization, control, and direction of our economy, to increase demands, eliminate inflated payrolls, and strengthen labor discipline. This should be done gradually, adjusting it to the conditions of each collective. This includes, among other things, the broadening of the profile of job evaluators, revising obsolete concepts that prevail in job classifications, and eliminating payment systems and legal norms which, in addition to halting our progress, do not favor the development of the workers' consciousness, and in certain cases, in contrast to the atmosphere of struggle and work that prevails in many places, encourage inertia in the solution of problems, encourage disorganization, and harbor laziness.

We are aware that this effort is the best tribute we can pay Che on his 60th birthday. [applause] The extraordinary strength of his example and his work help us make progress at this time. As Fidel said: He lives on more than ever, is present more than ever, influences more than ever. Because of this, his permanent and great presence is with us on this 1 May. [applause]

On this day, our people will make evident their decision to continue to boost the country's readiness for the war of all the people. We will strengthen our participation in the Territorial Troops Militia and will help to finance it even more.

More than 2.8 million workers have expressed their voluntary and conscious willingness to donate work for this purpose.

We celebrate this 1 May at a time when, as a result of the agreements reached between the Soviet Union and the United States, one can begin to catch a glimpse of encouraging signs in the international situation favoring peace and a slowing of the arms race. It is the result of the fight by all the peoples of the world and above all by the peace policy of socialism, especially that of the USSR. These agreements create the hope that, as an indispensable guarantee for peace, concrete steps can be taken toward development and toward paralyzing the aggressive hand of imperialism throughout various regions of the world.

This day, Cuban workers add their voices to the demand of the Third World to realize an end to the imperialist aggressions in Central America, Angola, the Middle East, and other parts of the world. [applause] The workers reiterate that the resources used to date on exorbitant military spending be channeled to development to face the world economic crisis and to the various political and social problems made more acute by the unbearable growth of the foreign debt and its interest.

On this 1 May we reiterate our militant solidarity with the workers and the people who face reactionary, fascist, and anti-democratic regimes and with all those who fight imperialism, neocolonialism, racism, and apartheid. We

reiterate our solidarity with the Nicaraguan people who, in very complex conditions, maintain all the fronts, the defense of the conquests of its people and the Sandinist revolution. [applause] We reiterate our solidarity with those in El Salvador and Guatemala who are fighting to build free and democratic societies. [applause] We reiterate our solidarity with those in Panama who firmly resist brutal imperialist actions in their determination to safeguard the canal agreements and to defend their independence and sovereignty. [applause] We reiterate our solidarity with those in Chile and Paraguay who face a bloody tyranny; with the Palestinian people who, in the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank, lead an immortal journey of resistance against the criminal Zionist repression. [applause]. We reiterate our solidarity with those who fight for the independence of Namibia, with those in South Africa who face the shameful apartheid regime, and with the valiant West Saharan peoples. [applause]

We could not leave out on this occasion our message of encouragement to the trade union organizations and their workers in developed capitalist countries, and our warmest greeting to the brothers of socialist countries. A very special greeting to Soviet workers [applause] who rejuvenate, in their revolutionary splendor, the tenacious determination to eradicate defects and errors, to achieve a happier and fuller life for the people, and to emphasize the unquestionable superiority of socialism.

On this International Workers Day, we pay our highest tribute of admiration to the experienced Angolan soldiers and to the Cuban heroic workers and internationalist soldiers. [applause] We pay our highest tribute of admiration to those in Cuito Cuanavale who taught an impressive lesson to the South African racist army. [applause]

We recently learned of the regrettable plane accident in southern Angola in which 26 courageous comrades of the FAR lost their lives. Undoubtedly, it was very painful news for all our people. The memory of the example of the valiant children of the fatherland who have fallen defending the just cause of liberty and the sovereignty of other peoples strengthens our revolutionary convictions and reaffirms our determination to continue fulfilling honorably our sacred internationalist commitments. [applause] Comrades, this commemoration will be a new and convincing demonstration of revolutionary reaffirmation of our working peoples and of its unbreakable unity with regard to the PCC and to its chief and guide, Comrade Fidel. [applause]

Workers, retired people, students, pioneers, our experienced FAR and Interior Ministry combatants, in sum, our revolutionary people—the men and the women—will march through this square. Grandparents, parents, and grandchildren will be joined together in the same way they do to build schools, hospitals, housing, child care centers, family doctor house-offices, and other important economic and social projects, in the same way they are willing to join together to defend the fatherland. [applause]

Cuba will never be intimidated or humiliated by a military attack or by those who hypocritically invoke political and moral arguments. Those who attack us will break their teeth against an irreducible bastion and will only realize the most overwhelming defeat as a result of their injustice.

The spontaneous happiness and natural satisfaction of the hundreds of thousands of faces that will pass by this platform will be a new, eloquent, and demolishing response to our enemies, the response of people who will reaffirm their willingness to move forward, led by Fidel, along the right path in the building of socialism. [applause]

Long live 1 May! [crowd answers: Viva!] Long live Fidel! [crowd answers: Viva!] Fatherland or death, we will win! [crowd joins in, saying: We will win!] [applause]

Risquet Meets Angolan, Leaves for London Talks

FL0105143888 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1249 GMT 1 May 88

[Text] The Cuban component of the joint Angolan-Cuban delegation that will take part in the negotiations with South African and U.S. representatives for a solution to the conflict in Africa's southern cone left today for London, the site of the meeting.

Jorge Risquet Valdes, member of the PCC Central Committee Politburo and Secretariat, who is leading the Cubans, met shortly before leaving with Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos.

The joint delegation is headed by Angolan Foreign Minister Afonso Van Dunem. Van Dunem and Risquet briefed the Angolan chief of state on the outcome of the talks held earlier by their two countries. A common position of the two nations was established in the course of these conversations in preparation for the talks that will be held in the British capital beginning 3 May. The Angolan-Cuban delegation will discuss the immediate implementation of UN Resolution 435 dealing with Namibian independence and the cessation of the interference of the Republic of South Africa in Angola's internal affairs, especially logistical aid to UNITA [Union for the Total Independence of Angola].

The talks will also center on international guarantees for Angolan security and on a calendar for the redeployment and gradual and total withdrawal of Cuban internationalist troops from Angolan territory.

Other members of the Cuban group include Carlos Aldana Escalante, member of the PCC Central Committee Secretariat; Martin Mora, Cuban ambassador to Angola; and PCC and Cuban Foreign Ministry officials.

Attorney General on Penal Code, Releases
FL3004115488 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 30 Apr 88

[Text] Law No 62 of the penal code becomes effective today throughout the entire county. The code will benefit, in one way or another, a good part of the existing penal population in the country.

For this purpose, prison dossiers are being reviewed. Cuban Attorney General Dr Ramon de la Cruz clarifies this:

[Begin De la Cruz recording] This measure consists of technical and legal aspects, as well as related conduct. The review is presented to the tribunal and it is up to the tribunal to decide if the sanctioned person will benefit or not. Some may leave immediately. Others may benefit from a reduced sanction but they will have to fulfill their remaining sentence.

The first prisoners will be released on 3 May when the tribunals issue their first decrees corresponding to this matter, and the process will continue slowly. This is a process that will take several weeks. However, there is no doubt that all those who benefit from the penal code will be released. [end recording]

Castro Participates in Planning Meeting Debates
FL2904235888 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 29 Apr 88

[Passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, first secretary of the PCC Central Committee, has actively participated in the debates of the second national planning meeting held at the Palace of Conventions.

[Castro] "How is the question of valuation to be solved? This is very important. I am talking about valuation, not the cost. That is one of the things we are most confused about. I can see it in the projects and I read it in the newspapers every day. They talk about such and such a cost. No one knows what that means. They don't know if it's the inflated cost, the stealing in between, the price inflation, the playing fast and loose with alleged earnings, the sharing of these earnings, and the prizes, etc, or whether it's the real cost. The first thing is that we don't know what anything costs here. We don't know what the projects cost. We are going to start learning how much a project costs. For me, one of the most serious problems in construction itself is just that one, there in the plans—the fact that it looks as if we are producing more in terms of value each year. We come out producing much more and appearing to produce much less. You can't go by the cost plus a 10 percent in earnings in construction because each time you reduce the costs, you are reducing the value of production. If instead of costing me 10 million [currency not specified], I add 10 percent, bringing the figure to 11, and it costs me 8, then a brigade can appear to be working much harder and producing less. And then the country looks as if it were underdeveloped instead of developed. It is producing less value, when perhaps a building that we erect for 100,000 costs 500,000 or a million in France, the FRG, or Britain, which report such and such a growth and such and such a gross product. Our problem is to be able to discern what values we are really creating with a greater productivity."

The 500 participants in the meeting discussed the aesthetics and functionality of projects, the dedication of planners, and something very important: the role that our planners must play in saving materials. In this connection, the chief of the revolution called on these specialists to supply fast solutions to new problems:

[Castro] "Perhaps we might take our time to complete 80 or 90 percent of the projects. All these standards and methodologies that you have brought up should be applied so we can do things at our convenience, so we can choose among the alternatives. However, 10 or 15 percent of the projects will respond to new problems, new situations, new needs."

Later, the leader of the Cuban revolution said that if we are not capable of responding quickly to the plans we make, these will become like straitjackets. He praised the work carried out by the Blas Roca Calderio Contingent in highway construction, and urged the reconciliation of the positive capabilities of socialism to plan everything it does with the prompt response to problems that arise. He assessed the work carried out by the planning front as follows:

[Castro] "I believe that we have made progress. The report, the proposals, the work, the progress made—all these show that the idea of creating the planning front was correct. We have not taken anyone's autonomy away. We have not affected any organization's authority. We have helped all of them. I believe that this demonstrates how new ideas can come about. They do not have to take the form of an organic institution. It can come about with just the work that everyone is doing. To each his own."

It was past 2030 when our top leader began a tour of the projects exhibition located in the Palace's lobby. He stopped at the model showing the highways now under construction in the capital.

Castro, Soviet Scientist Open Health Centers
FL2904185488 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 29 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Soviet scientist (Svyatoslav Fedorov), creator of the new surgical procedure for the correction of myopia, has arrived in Havana to attend the official

inauguration of the serial eyr microsurgery center in the Pando Ferrer Hospital. This is the first center of its type to operate outside the Soviet Union. [passage omitted]

Emergency Center Inaugurated

FL3004023088 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 29 Apr 88

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, first secretary of the PCC Central Committee and president of the Councils of State and Ministers, inaugurated this afternoon the medical emergency center of the Luis Diaz Soto Higher Institute of Military Medicine in this capital. Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Mendez, director of the facility, explained to Fidel that the hospital now has 109 more beds, totaling over 800. This will result in better services for the civilian and military population.

Afterward, our commander in chief attended the inauguration of the (Elpidio Berovides) Instructional Polyclinic in La Lisa municipality. With it, the more than 34,500 residents of the very heavily populated community of San Agustin will have access to such services as physical therapy, rehabilitation, a dental clinic, an emergency room, X-ray facilities, and a 24-hour laboratory.

Fidel also toured the facilities of the Salvador Allende Hospital's Medical Sciences School which was inaugurated this afternoon. Benjamin Castillo reports on this.

[Begin Castillo recording] Our Commander in Chief Fidel Castro attended the inauguration of the facilities of the Salvador Allende Medical Sciences School. The facilities cover approximately two blocks on Carvajal Street between A and Agua Dulce Streets next to the Salvador Allende Hospital in the capital's El Cerro municipality. The commander in chief visited the amphitheater, an anatomy class, a computer room, a pharmacology laboratory, and an experimental surgery laboratory. He was accompanied by Dean (Talina Santiesteban).

Fidel chatted with medical students during the visit. He also received an album with details on the construction of the project presented by Reynaldo Gongora and Ramon Perez, party secretary and [words indistinct], respectively, as well as members of the Vicente Garcia contingent from Las Tunas Province, which was in charge of the construction. Worker Enriqueta Gomez Riva and student Pedro Frometa Frometa, both outstanding in donation of voluntary hours to the project, gave Fidel the collective commitments of the center aimed at developing quality work in the training of the new health professionals. [end recording]

Eye Surgery Center Opened

FL3004030288 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 30 Apr 88

[Text] The last project Fidel inaugurated this afternoon was Havana's Serial Eye Microsurgery Center.

The commander in chief, accompanied by the prominent Soviet scientist, (Svyatoslav Fedorov), toured various areas of the center. First, they visited the diagnostic room used for patients prior to surgery, where they chatted with specialists and were informed of the modern medical history computerized system. Once at the serial eye microsurgery room, Fidel and Professor (Fedorov), creator of this surgical technique, were able to observe how the transporting belt functions. They also talked with the young surgeons about the capacity of this center, the number of specialists trained in this new technique, and the numerous advantages offered by the new system.

Once they completed the tour at the Pando Ferrer Hospital's Ocular Microsurgery Center, a ceremony was held as an overview of today's activities in hospital centers in the capital. The following is an excerpt of Commander in Chief Fidel Castro's remarks at this event:

[Begin Castro recording, in progress] ... and that is how it's been. We have inaugurated this afternoon these projects beginning with the Diaz Soto Hospital. An emergency center was inaugurated there. Anyone can listen to these words and not have an idea of what the institution is like. I really think it is a very comprehensive center created with a very advanced concept. It is a great institution. It is not a mere emergency center, because what could an emergency center be? That center has thousands of square meters of space. It has very modern equipment. Above all, it has an extraordinarily important function. It was the first one in the country; hours later, a second one just like it was inaugurated. Judging by what we saw there, all the facilities and possibilities are there to give maximum attention to any emergency case. [end recording]

Medical Projects Discussed

FL3004161088 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1317 GMT 30 Apr 88

[Exchange between President Fidel Castro and Soviet scientist (Svyatoslav Fedorov) during a break in their tour of the Carlos J. Finlay Emergency Center on 29 April—recorded]

[Text] [Castro] We have five projects today. By the end of the year we will inaugurate [words indistinct] more projects. We will inaugurate a pediatric hospital, two [corrects himself] three very big extensions. We will inaugurate the Frank Pais Hospital extension.

This year we have [words indistinct] extensions left. We have 20 more polyclinics like the one we saw. They were in old homes. This year the entire city has 64. Is it 64 or 74? There are 75 polyclinics now.

[Unidentified speaker] This year there are 20 polyclinics.

[Castro, interrupting] There are 20. They all have adequate installations. They all have physical therapy gyms.

[(Fedorov), in Russian with consecutive Spanish translation] How (?is this possible) [words indistinct]

[Castro] We are making sacrifices.

[(Fedorov)] [Words indistinct]

[Castro] There is a small amount of resources (?available). These resources are dedicated to research, to hospitals such as this, new medical technology.

We are always looking for investments for this purpose. I think that hospitals will become a source of convertible income. I'm talking about new hospitals. They will have about 150 beds for (?patients).

All this today elevates the quality of medical service to all the people. However, I think that medicine will become a source of income in our country.

Now we have to develop tourism and we have to develop other areas. One of the things we are doing now is collecting gold and silver, silver coins which have been saved. These resources are being dedicated to health investments, research. The industry is important.

If we lack the resources, we have to find them. One has to work more and better to achieve this. One has to work more and better in each area that generates income. I'm referring to income spent on equipment.

This year we will finish two medical equipment factories. We will manufacture the majority of our own medical equipment, except for new very sophisticated equipment, such as an axial [words indistinct] tomography, magnetic nuclear resonance [resonancia nuclear magnetica], or a linear accelerator. We have to buy these abroad.

We are waiting for the Soviet Union to develop and produce medical equipment so that we can purchase some of the equipment from the USSR. We also hope to export some equipment to the USSR. We have high-quality laboratory equipment, such as the ultra micro-analytic system. It is a very modern piece of equipment which does not yet exist in other countries, and is used in (?intensive laboratory research). It is a large (?acquisition) but it is very beneficial. They say that the Soviet Union is making an effort... [changes thought] The center we visited has some Soviet equipment. It also has some Japanese equipment, capitalist and Soviet medical equipment.

Dominican Republic

Balaguer Suspends Certain Imports for 1 Year

FL3004182288 Santo Domingo Radio Mil Network in Spanish 1135 GMT 30 Apr 88

[Text] President Joaquin Balaguer last night suspended for 1 year the import of vehicles which have (Saldo) motors and hold more than 17 passengers.

According to Decree No (215.88) the chief of state also prohibited the import of certain consumer goods, appliances, and radio and television transmitters and receivers.

Other items that cannot be imported for 1 year include water heaters, immersible electric heaters, space heaters, electric irons, electrical and technical appliances for domestic use, and other similar articles.

Also prohibited is the import of shaving and haircutting equipment, [word indistinct] with electro-magnetic floors and incorporated motors, electro-mechanical suction dust removers, and other electrical and mechanical items for domestic use.

Only diplomats accredited in the Dominican Republic are exempt from the official decree. However, the import of consumer merchandise should be made on the basis of reciprocity.

Haiti

Manigat on National Reconciliation Policy

FL2904200888 Port-au-Prince LE PROGRESSISTE HAITIEN in French Vol I, No II 28 Apr 88 p 2

[Interview with President Leslie Manigat by P. Brutus under the rubric "Discussions": "Statements by the President of the Republic on the Second Anniversary of His Return From Exile"—dated "26 April 1988"; place not given]

[Excerpts] P.B.: Two years ago today you returned to Haiti after many years in exile. Looking back on the road traveled by Professor Manigat, can the president of the Republic tell us what lesson useful to Haiti's future there is to be learned from this road?

Answer: [Passage omitted] There is the lesson of a struggle, the significance of a struggle. From the beginning, this struggle has been waged with consistency, with perseverance, without ever faltering, without ever deviating. [passage omitted]

I was not an anti-Duvalierist—not at all. In my opinion, Duvalier's message in 1957 corresponded to something real and profound in Haiti. However, I was opposed to the prostitution of this message, the deformation of this message of honesty into corruption, of freedom into oppression. The furtherance of the growth and development of life turned into carnage and disregard for life;

the will to promote the peasantry and bring it into the mainstream of society turned into the exploitation of the peasant; the forces that should have been people's forces were transformed into repressive forces. Obviously, whoever held these principles could not fail to see that these principles were being violated and could not fail to take a different position.

But please notice! What is today important is that ever since I came back, in fact the very day I returned—and there again you can see the consequences of peoples' positions and openness—I announced a certain political line. [passage omitted]

I announced reconciliation. The very moment I arrived, in the speech I made at the airport, I announced a policy of reconciliation, which was necessary. That is what we are doing. We have been reproached for having said that there will be no witchhunts. Yet this was the best thing for the country! It is not that we do not have a sense of justice. We, too, have a sense of justice. But, given the shape the country was in, we simply had no right to contribute ourselves to aggravating the disintegration of the social fabric.

However, what we ourselves today say is that those who are benefiting from this policy of national reconciliation must nevertheless not forget that a regime was in fact overthrown on 7 February 1986, and for very specific reasons. They must not forget that the Haitian people rejected this type of regime, and that it is thus unreasonable to try, using the means we are currently seeing, to reestablish this kind of regime in Haiti. This the Haitian people would never accept. It would no longer be the government having to defend itself and to defend democracy. The people would not accept that. Those who are benefiting from this honest, fair, open, and sincere policy of cooperation nevertheless should not forget that they were in fact spurned by the Haitian people for having killed and stolen and for having gotten this country into the condition it is in today.

We have decided to turn the page. We have decided to write a new history on a new and virgin page. But at least let us write it in peace! Things should not be forgotten too quickly!

P.B.: Thank you, Mr President.

Answer: You are welcome.

Violence Begins After Manigat Warns Duvalierists

FL2904145688 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 29 Apr 88

[Text] Gunmen in a moving car have opened fire on pedestrians in downtown Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The shooting, apparently a renewal of terrorist activity in the country, killed at least one person and several were injured. The four gunmen were dressed in civilian clothing, and fired at random in a crowded downtown intersection.

The shooting came Wednesday evening, 24 hours after President Leslie Manigat went on national television warning supporters of the deposed Duvalier dictatorship not to try to establish this kind of regime in Haiti.

People's Movement Called To Achieve Solidarity

FL2704225888 Port-au-Prince Radio Haiti-Inter in Creole 2000 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Broadcast in progress]

[Excerpts]...and macoute elections will always give us 26 Aprils.

It is under these slogans that the day of reflection and mobilization in connection with 26 April began with a news conference on the morning of Tuesday, 26 April, at the Holiday Inn.

The League of Former Haitian Political Prisoners and Friends and Relatives of Missing Persons [LAPPH], the People's National Assembly [APN], and the Socialist Workers League [Lig Ouvriye Sosyalist, LOS] gathered to commemorate 26 April.

These three organizations think the Haitian people should seek the cause of the massacre of 1963 and of the river of blood that flowed in front of Fort Dimanche on Saturday, 26 April 1986. They call for a chain of solidarity among the popular forces in order to prevent another 26 April from occurring in Haiti.

[Begin recording of unidentified speaker] It is very necessary for us to be able to reach agreement on the course the people's movement should take to be able to establish a revolutionary, people's government founded on the strength of the popular masses. This (?can be done by) carrying out constant work that will lead the workers to reflect upon their situation in the factories, that will lead the impoverished peasants to discover the trap the big landowners have set for them through the tenant farmer system in force. Only revolutionary awareness on the part of the workers, the impoverished peasants, the students, and the unemployed can prevent another massacre from occurring in Haiti. [passage omitted] [end recording]

The speakers at the news conference castigated what they termed an uncouth bourgeoisie that wants to use the people's demands to further its own interests. The speakers think that all mass organizations must wage a revolutionary struggle so that Fort Dimanche and all other sites of repression can be done away with. They believe that the battle to get Fort Dimanche given back to the

people should be linked to all the people's most fundamental causes, such as the protests against poverty and against the economic crisis in Haiti, the demands for Creole pigs, and the protests against poisoned garbage and toxic waste.

They say that the 14 May communique that promised to do away with Fort Dimanche was just words. They say: The same policy continues. The same actors who were on the scene and who participated in the 26 April 1963 and 1986 massacres are still on the scene, are still in place within the public administration.

The hall at the Holiday Inn was filled with pictures of people who were tortured or who died under the repression of the Duvalier regime. [passage omitted]

At the speakers table at this news conference were (Ernst Saint-Juste), representing the LAPPH; Frantz L. Jean and (Jean-Robert Lalanne), representing the APN; and Ronald Dejean, representing the LOS.

Workers Federation Questions Court Procedures

FL2604232088 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil in Creole 1100 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Excerpts] The National Federation of Industrial Workers [Fenati], which is affiliated with CATH/CLAT [Autonomous Haitian Workers Central affiliated with the Latin American Central Organization of Workers], in an open letter addressed to Prime Minister Martial Celestin in his capacity as Haiti's minister of justice, calls his attention to the problems workers are having in the labor court and in the court of cassation. [passage omitted]

Fenati says it feels that administratively the court of cassation does not do its job properly because when a dossier leaves the labor court, (?the loser) asks for a ruling from the court of cassation without having the court of appeals examine the dossier. This is done in order to speed things up.

The letter says that, within the court of cassation, there is a form of court of appeal that is dragging things out. [passage omitted]

They ask Haiti's new justice minister whether the court of cassation should be abusing and putting down the workers whenever it wishes. They wonder if there is not some kind of collusion between the important individuals in the court of cassation and the big plant proprietors in Haiti. [passage omitted]

Fenati asks to meet with the minister to discuss all the problems workers are encountering in plants, at the Ministry of Social Affairs, in the labor court, and in the court of cassation.

Uneasiness Reported Among Peasants in Northwest

FL2704222388 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in Creole 1600 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Excerpts] There has been uneasiness among the peasants for some time because of insecurity and also because of the high cost of living.

Following the death of (Elimene Pierre), a 59-year-old man in the fourth communal section (?of) Chansolme, many peasants in that area have begun to experience headaches.

(?We met) certain relatives of (Elimene Pierre) who said that their problems began when they saw 10 people kill their father, who left them with a bunch of children to care for. They say they are now waiting for the police to make a statement, although the police have already arrested four of the murderers: (Nova Die), (Enoch Innocent), and (Meristile). [numbers as heard] These men are now in jail in Chansolme.

The family of (Elimene Pierre) is waiting for the police to make a statement, to provide security for them, because their father died in too strange a manner, hacked to pieces with machetes and beaten with clubs. [passage omitted]

Also, in certain parts of the far west [preceding two words in English], the peasants are still complaining about a group of unidentified persons who are stealing all their livestock.

There is uneasiness among the peasants in the La Coma section [area involved in Jean-Rabel incidents] who are still in hiding, waiting for the final word from the pertinent authorities, so that they can return home. [passage omitted]

Jamaica

Seaga, Soviet Officials Discuss Bauxite Exports

FL2904162288 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 29 Apr 88

[Text] Soviet officials met in Jamaica yesterday with Prime Minister Edward Seaga. The talks focused on glasnost, which is the Soviet new direction of openness, and possible renewed bauxite exports to the Soviet Union from Jamaica.

The delegation is the highest-ranking Soviet group ever to visit the island.

Prime Minister Edward Seaga said in his words: There is much room for improvement in Jamaican-Soviet relations.

He remains a strong ally of the United States and has been harshly critical of Moscow.

Further on Soviets' Visit

FL3004003088 Bridgetown CANA in English 2130 GMT 29 Apr 88

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, April 29, CANA—Jamaica and the Soviet Union are on the path to better relations but the Jamaican Prime Minister Edward Seaga says there is still a significant way to go.

"There is much room for improvement in Jamaica-Soviet relations," Seaga told a visiting delagation from the Soviet Parliament, the Supreme Soviet. However, Seaga said the state of relations was "better than that it has been in the last seven years."

The Soviet delegation, led by Aleksandr Mokanu, the vice president of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, arrived in Kingston on Wednesday after visits to Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. The group also includes two Supreme Soviet deputies (Aleksey Kuleshov) and (Matti Pedak), as well as two officials from the Soviet Foreign Ministry and the Supreme Soviet. They have been talking with Jamaican Governm..nt officials and parliamentarians and visiting agricultural and industrial sites here.

The recurring theme of the informal talks has been the need to improve relations. All countries need to work for peace and improved relations, Mokanu told Jamaican parliamentarians on Thursday, "not just the super powers." "A certain stereotype of the Soviet Union has taken shape in some quarters that we are enemies of peace and progress," Mokanu said through an interpreter. "We need peace no less than anyone else."

The visit to the Caribbean is largely to acquaint the region of Mihkail Gorbachev's policy of "glasnost" or openness, though the Jamaicans have raised the possibility of increasing their sale of bauxite to Moscow.

The visit to Jamaica and the informal meeting with Seaga is seen here as further evidence of the softning of Seaga's earlier tough anti-Soviet position. The former Michael Manley administration developed good relations with the Soviets in the 1970's and invited Moscow to set up a mission here in 1972. However, the conservative Seaga had denounced such relations, and cooled activities after he came to office in 1980 and began to draw Jamaica close to Washington. Seaga in 1981 broke diplomatic relations with Cuba and two years later expelled two Soviet diplomats and a Cuban journalist over an alleged plot to murder a Jamaican Foreign Ministry officer.

However, economic concerns have helped to heal the wounds. The Soviets have emerged as an important customer for Jamaican bauxite with a contract to buy up to a million tonnes a year, under agreement originally signed in the late 1970's to deliver alumina. Jamaica in return buys from the Soviet Union up to 20 per cent of the value of its bauxite sale, taking mostly Russian-built vehicles.

Trinidad and Tobago

New Theories on Causes of Army Bunker Explosion

FL2904195588 Bridgetown CANA in English 1448 GMT 29 Apr 88

[Text] Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, April 29, CANA—Trinidad and Tobago's defence forces have been throwing out new theories about the cause of an explosion in a North West Trinidad Army camp which killed six servicemen. An internal enquiry is underway into the incident at Camp Omega in Chaguaramas. Officials said that investigators were considering whether a bush fire created the heat trigger or set off the explosion as flames reached the ammunitions bunker.

During a tour to the devastated area on Thursday afternoon, Prime Minister A.N.R. Robinson was told that heavy weather was being made of the theory that the bush fire some 40 men were fighting behind the bunker set off the explosion. The TRINIDAD GUARDIAN said officials now believed a short circuit inside the bunker had detonated the explosives held at the camp on behalf of local quarry owners.

An internal board of enquiry began its work on Thursday and is expected to report back by next Wednesday.

Survivors reports now indicate that smoke was seen coming from the bunker and the men then fighting the bush fire on the nearby hillside were told to clear the area. Before they could finish packing up, the blast took place. Four firemen and two soldiers were killed in the explosion.

Officials said the blast could have been much more devastating had it taken place a week later. A local conglomerate had been scheduled to bring a major shipload of explosives to be stored on the site this coming week.

We are grateful as a nation that no more lives were lost or no more damage caused. The country can consider itself lucky and we sympathise with the families of the dead, Prime Minister Robinson told reporters at the end of his tour. Robinson said that after the results of the enquiry were released, government would look at measures to minimize a repetition of such an event.

El Salvador

PDC Nominates Rey Prendes for President

PA3004041688 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0310 GMT 30 Apr 88

[Report by Mauricio Funez]

[Excerpts] Today Christian Democrat Julio Adolfo Rey Prendes was nominated as the Christian Democratic Party, PDC, presidential candidate amidst a fierce dispute. Five members of the political committee that supported Duarte's proposal withdrew from the national convention, visibly annoyed. Following Rey Prendes' nomination, Rodolfo Castillo Claramount threatened to resign as PDC secretary general. [passage omitted]

President Jose Napoleon Duarte presented a proposal, supported by 5 of the 10 members who comprise the PDC's National Political Commission, that the convention not elect the party's presidential candidate. However, 174 of the 226 representatives who attended the convention approved Dr Julio Adolfo Rey Prendes' candidacy. Despite the presidential candidate's optimism, the PDC Political Commission members who support President Duarte's proposal insisted that Rey Prendes' presidential ambitions could lead the party to its destruction. [passage omitted]

Honduras

Azcona on Economy, U.S. Embassy Damage

PA2904180588 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1120 GMT 29 Apr 88

[Interview with President Jose Azcona Hoyo by Francisco Valeriano Giron; date, place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Giron] Is there any unrest because of some of the laws passed by Congress?

[Azcona] No, there is no unrest because of laws passed by Congress. Some measures that have affected income have been adopted, but we will make progress anyhow.

[Giron] Will you ask that some of these laws be reconsidered?

[Azcona] No, I am not going to do that. There is, however, the law on coffee taxes which could be discussed with producers because the law-decree on coffee is very drastic. However, the country is making progress, and economic activities in various sectors—commerce, construction, and manufacturing—are on the increase. Some sectors have some problems, but I believe we are going to resolve those problems.

[Giron] Do you have economic advisers, Mr President?

[Azcona] Any person consulted is an economic adviser. The main economic advisers, however, are those in the government.

[Giron] It is being said that politically speaking you have been left on your own. Is this how you see it also?

[Azcona] No way. How could I be alone? On the contrary, we are doing well. I believe we are going to receive more support. I do not see why I could be left alone. There is the government and the experts. We are establishing relations with the party, with the most important people of the party.

[Giron] Are employees going to be pressured?

[Azcona] I do not believe they are going to be forced to do anything because no law says that the employees of a government must support any particular party. However, I believe that if the executive branch works in unison, as it has been doing, then all members of the Liberal Party will be happy to make contributions to the party to guarantee a new victory.

[Giron] Would you support reforms to the electoral law?

[Azcona] We discussed that issue today. Apparently the national convention, which is the party's top authority, has approved some reforms.

[Giron] Do you agree with internal elections taking place simultaneously [as heard]?

[Azcona] I believe it would be beneficial if they take place in one single day, but we did not discuss that today, and I do not want to discuss details about that.

[Giron] Do you believe that either your government or yourself could have been politically harmed by the latest crisis endured by the country?

[Azcona] I do not think so. I think that what happened will benefit the country. Acts of violence are regrettable, but those that have taken place have shown that we in Honduras are not immune to violence. The same day incidents were taking place here, 13 persons died in San Salvador as a result of a bomb explosion. The loss of lives is unfortunate and violence against a building and facilities next to the U.S. Embassy is regrettable because this does not help the country.

[Giron] Have you talked with U.S. Government officials about an indemnity? It is being said that damage amounts to $6 million.

[Azcona] No, we have nothing about $6 million. What we have received is a note from the U.S. ambassador the day after the incidents. They are entitled to file a protest. The note says that later there will be a [words indistinct].

Honduras signed the Geneva Convention on the responsibility of governments when actions are carried out against diplomatic installations.

[Giron] The forcing of radio stations to join a radio network and the imposing of a state of emergency have been the source of much criticism against your government.

[Azcona] I have heard some criticism because of the network. Perhaps we had it for a few hours too many. Regarding the state of emergency, however, the people have responded positively because one more casualty would have had negative effects. The state of emergency made it possible for people to cool down, and those on the streets returned to their homes. I feel it was beneficial. The declaration of emergency decree was based on the Constitution and on presidential authority. Congress was informed about this.

I believe this was a positive measure, and this is how the people have viewed it, positively.

[Giron] Do you believe the situation has been overcome?

[Azcona] We do not know if the situation is over. I think so. I believe that what happened is that tempers got hot for a moment, and that some sectors, which I do not want to name because they have been identified by the people, took advantage of this. Perhaps some people tried to make political gains and the situation got out of hand.

I believe, however, that everything is more or less quiet. The government is talking with the various sectors. There is a small strike by a small group of health workers. Checks with salary increases covering a 4-month period will be paid today. Some readjustments will be made to favor some employees who have not received the increases we had promised.

We want to appeal to health sector labor unions to set aside any confrontational attitude because the government is meeting and will meet all its commitments.

[Giron] What can you tell us about the latest incidents with Nicaragua?

[Azcona] These are not the first incidents. I believe incidents will continue happening. However, the government is prepared to enforce respect for the country's sovereignty.

Nicaragua

Government, RN Continue Meeting in Managua

Tinoco on Proposal

PA2904185188 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1537 GMT 29 Apr 88

[News conference held by Vice Foreign Minister Victor Hugo Tinoco and Paul Riechler, Nicaraguan Government adviser to the talks with the Nicaraguan Resistance (RN), with unidentified reporters at the Las Mercedes Hotel in Managua—live]

[Text] [Tinoco] Good morning, journalist friends. We were interested in having this meeting with you in order to give you, the Nicaraguan people, and the international community a more detailed explanation of the meaning and nature of the proposal presented to the contra delegation yesterday afternoon by Nicaragua's constitutional government; that is, the proposal for humanitarian aid to flow immediately to the irregular forces without any delay caused by some problems that we are encountering in the overall peace negotiations, the negotiations for a definitive cease-fire.

The first thing that we want to point out is that the Nicaraguan Government's proposal to have the International Red Cross [IRC], which is based in Geneva, proceed immediately to carry out this task is not a substitute for our negotiating proposal; in other words, it is not a substitute for the proposal we presented on 18 April. It is a proposal for a provisional, interim solution, to be used until the more basic problem is resolved; that is, the problem of peace, disarmament, national dialogue, zones, etc.

Yesterday there seemed to have been some confusion about whether this would replace the other proposal. No. We continue to negotiate for our proposal. Our proposal has already been made, and, as you know, it has three parts: There was the part covering the definitive zones, modus operandi, and supplies; the part covering the national democratization dialogue; and the part dealing with the reintegration of the rebels into political life; that is, the ending of the rebellion. That is our proposal, an overall proposal.

Well, because there are some problems with reaching an agreement on that entire package, and since it is being argued that we made that proposal to keep the contras from receiving humanitarian aid, we said that we are presenting a proposal to them whereby the contras can receive the humanitarian aid and we can continue to seriously discuss the political problems that are at the root of Nicaragua's problems and so that we can reach an in-depth solution to our problem, which is this war of aggression, this military problem. Therefore, the first clarification is this: This is a provisional, interim proposal to resolve the problem of humanitarian aid. We are waiting for the contras' response to this.

You will recall that they were repeatedly saying that they had food problems, that they were dying of hunger, etc., and they were trying to blame us for that, when, as you will recall, it was the contra delegation that delayed this negotiating process to a great extent. Beginning with the Sapoa meeting, that delegation arrived 5 or 6 hours late, couldn't work after 1700, etc., etc. Therefore, the delay has partly been the fault of the contra delegation itself, and partly due to the fact that this is a complex problem, a complex problem, [repeats himself], a political problem, (?the essential) problem, the problem of peace in Nicaragua.

Therefore, our proposal is that while we are resolving all of that, we have this solution. Now, we do not know what the contras' reaction to this proposal will be, but it is a proposal that resolves their basic problem for the time being, for 30 days. Note that the proposal says that it is for the Red Cross to take charge for 30 days; that is, until 30 May, because it is expected that by 30 May we will have reached an agreement on the entire package, and the entire package would also include a special procedure, a modus operandi, with established zones, with a supply mechanism, etc., which would be more stable. Therefore, this is a provisional proposal for the interim, pending the definitive resolution of this problem.

Now then, we have proposed the IRC because it is an organization that can resolve the problem immediately, right? The IRC already has experience in this type of situation. It has the resources, the trucks, the airplanes that might be needed. It does not have to begin preparing; it is an organization that already has an entire professional structure to do this. That is why we chose the IRC.

A second reason is that, obviously, the IRC is a neutral organization. It operates in almost all the countries in the world, and no one could call it a pro-Sandinist organization, because it is based in Geneva. Its directors are foreigners. It has its own methods, and everthing would probably be handled by the organization from Geneva. They have the capacity for this. Moreover, it is a guarantee for the contras and a guarantee for the government that what is to be provided will be only humanitarian aid.

So far, we have heard the contra argument that the problem with using the IRC is that they, the contras, are not refugees, as if the IRC were only concerned with ambulances and taking people to the hospital. We have explained to them that this is a very limited, very narrow view of what the IRC really is. It is true that our experience with the Red Cross has been with social functions of the local chapter. However, the IRC, the International Red Cross Committee that is based in Geneva, has played a humanitarian role in the resolution of many wars, many conflicts: in World War I, World War II, the Middle East war between the Arabs and the Israelis, different kinds of wars among states, and all kinds of wars in Africa, for example. The IRC has played a humanitarian role in military conflicts, whether or not they involved a war between states, or a war of aggression waged by a superpower against a small country, which is the case in Nicaragua at present. Therefore, one cannot say that the IRC is a symbol indicating that the contras have refugee status. No, the IRC, I repeat, in Vietnam, everywhere, has played an important role in resolving a humanitarian problem whenever there has been a war or a conflict.

Moreover, there is a humanitarian problem here, too. They are saying that it is a problem of hunger. Well, then the IRC would play this role to resolve the problem.

On the other hand, it must be said that if the contras use the argument that they cannot accept the Red Cross because they are not refugees, but fighters, well, in the first place, I explained that the Red Cross also participates in military conflicts, in wars, and has done so historically. However, that would mean that the contras are thinking that they are not going to put down their weapons, that they are going to continue being belligerents, or fighters, for who knows how long, while the humanitarian aid that the U.S. Congress approved for them—illegally, but they approved it—is humanitarian aid provided with the idea that they are going to disarm, with the idea that a peace process is under way. If one reads the U.S. law, it states clearly in the prologue: The following humanitarian aid is for the forces of the national resistance—that is how they describe the contras—in view of the fact that there is a definitive, sustained peace process under way. In other words, from the viewpoint of the U.S. Congress itself, this humanitarian aid that was approved was granted in view of the fact that a peace process is under way.

Therefore, the excuse that I am a fighter and not a refugee cannot be used. You may be a fighter because you carry weapons, but you may also be a fighter who wants peace, a fighter who wants to stop this war that has been bleeding Nicaragua and to become a peasant and join the production, agricultural, or political process and join the country's political life as a leader or as a member of a Nicaraguan political party.

We believe that our proposal, the government's proposal, is a very serious one, and that the arguments they are using against the IRC are truly weak arguments. The IRC is a neutral and serious organization; also, the aid the contras will be receiving is humanitarian aid and not aid for an army that will continue to fight for the next 10 years, 5 years, a year, or 6 months. We are talking of aid to help them through a period while the issue of peace is resolved. Therefore, this is a provisional offer on our part; a proposal that will only be in effect until a definitive agreement is reached. This was something we wanted to clear up.

As far as we know, the contras have not given their answer regarding this matter. The talks continue and, as you already know, the real problem is not an easy one to resolve because we are insisting on a peace agreement and not only on a cease-fire. We are suggesting an overall agreement; an agreement that will include many aspects. Even though this would be an overall agreement, it could be implemented in phases. We are not suggesting that we will implement the modus operandi after some results are achieved in the national dialogue. We are saying that each thing will be implemented in its time. But we have to reach an overall agreement.

For various reasons, the contras, partly because of their internal differences—there are some factions that do not want peace, that do not want to lay down their weapons and join national life—do not wish to sign a political

document. This makes the problem a delicate one. There are differences between the contras who do want a peace agreement giving them a political opening that will allow them to participate in Nicaragua's political life and the other contras who do not want this. Therefore, there are contradictions. As long as these differences within the contras are not resolved, it will be very difficult to reach a firm agreement.

Therefore, we need time, and because we need this time, we suggested the 30-day extension of the halt to all offensive operations. We made the proposal for two main reasons: to save Nicaraguan lives—had the cease-fire not been declared, 100 Nicaraguans who are alive today would be dead—and because we need time to reach a definitive agreement, for the contras to resolve their differences, for the contras to agree on the need for peace, and for them to join the country's political life. This was another reason for the 30-day extension: This 30-day extension would give us time to do all the things that have to be done, and it also offers tranquillity for the people.

I understand that some contra spokesmen rejected this proposal yesterday. However, I hope they will think things over and realize that this extension is good, not only for the Nicaraguan people, but for them. They are a military force created by the United States, and they should find a political solution to their problems.

Gentlemen of the press, we wanted to let you know that the proposal we presented yesterday is a serious one; we uphold our proposal, and we hope that the contras will think about it. If they accept the proposal, their supply problem would be resolved in an honorable and reasonable manner. Are there any questions?

[Reporter] I would like to ask two questions. First, this morning we heard the so-called Commander Quiche say that they have rejected your proposal. What will the government do now? Second, I have learned that supply flights—food and weapons—have already been made. What can you tell us about that?

[Tinoco] I have heard that some contra military leaders have rejected the proposal. As far as I know, there has been no official answer to the proposal. I do not think they have given the press their answer, either. Therefore, I hope they will think about this proposal. They claim they are having food problems and that the Nicaraguan Government wants to starve the contras to death; if they do not accept the proposal then the truth will be that they are not really interested in resolving their problems, that they do not care about what happens to their fighters. It would mean that they are following the guidelines of those who are in Miami. Those in Miami are not hungry. They have food; therefore, they do not care whether or not the IRC supplies the fighters with food. If they do not accept the proposal then they would be following the U.S. Administration's guidelines as expressed by Abrams to the contras, before they flew to Managua. You probably know that after I talked this over with the contras in Miami, Abrams flew to Miami to meet with them.

So if the contras now reject our proposal, it would seem that they are following Abrams' orders. I do not know what Abrams may have told them, if he instructed them not to sign anything, not to accept any solution, maybe with the idea of resuming military aid. How? We do not know. However, that worries us, because it would mean that they are not really giving attention to the problems affecting some of the contras who are actually facing hunger, and that they would only be playing the political game that Abrams presented to them in Miami.

Regarding the supplies, this may also reflect the same thing: that the administration, the CIA, in one way or another may be violating congressional laws and therefore the contras are receiving supplies. Consequently, they are not really interested in sending food for the contras, because they are receiving it illegally. That would be illegal, not only from the viewpoint of international law, but also from the viewpoint of an approved U.S. law regarding humanitarian aid for the contras. That could be the reason why they have refused to accept our proposal.

[Reporter] The almost 6 hours of discussions yesterday basically dealt with interpretations of the Sapoa agreement: whether it should be a process to be signed in parts after successive agreements, or if it should be seen within an overall concept. As a result of that discussion, did the contras modify their position, have their views varied, or have they basically maintained their criteria?

[Tinoco] I am not sure if the contras have varied their position yet. However, part of the problem is that those discussions were necessary again, perhaps repeating ourselves, because the problem is that the contras keep sending new people. We had previously met with Tono, Fernando, Maililma, and others. So the same things we discussed now with Quiche and Max and the others had been discussed with Tono and Fernando before. However, these people now come with the same arguments, giving the impression that either they are not aware of or that they know nothing about what we are saying. We have therefore had to discuss the Nicaraguan proposal as a whole, explaining why we have made an overall proposal, that we are not asking them to lay down their weapons before the two previous phases have been accomplished, but that our proposal is that there should be a clear and expressed political agreement that they will do so if the two previous phases are implemented successfully. So we have had to repeat all those things to the new representatives. We must assume that they have come in good faith; we cannot assume that they are ill-intentioned people. Therefore, we try to explain everything all over again.

That is one of the reasons. The other is that they are maintaining their position of only signing a partial agreement, and not committing themselves to definitive peace.

[Riechler] It is obvious now that there are two forces totally opposed to Sapoa and to the efforts to end the war: the Reagan administration, represented mainly by Elliott Abrams, U.S. under secretary of state for inter-American affairs; and the other force, represented by former National Guard Colonel Enrique Bermundez, the contras' military commander.

On 23 March in Sapoa, it was possible to arrive at an agreement. It was possible to reach a peace agreement for a cease-fire, opening the possibility for a definitive end of the war and for national reconciliation. This was possible because the contra representatives in Sapoa managed to act independently from those two negative and dark forces that want the war to continue.

The contra military commanders Tono and Fernando managed to free themselves of Enrique Bermudez' policy of continuing the war, of continuing the bloodshed, and they signed the agreement. Furthermore, the contras' political leaders, the three members of their Directorate, managed to free themselves from U.S. Government policies, the Reagan administration policies, and Mr Abrams' policies, and they signed a historical agreement. These people deserve a great deal of credit and applause for having signed this agreement.

However, what has happened since 23 March? First, Tono and Fernando have disappeared. No one wants to say where they are now. In reality, Bermudez perpetrated a coup against his general staff, a coup by the unconventional forces' army. Tono and Fernando were left dangling or perhaps even worse. Who knows where they might be for having tried to achieve definitive peace with the constitutional Nicaraguan Government. Who represents the military now that they will no longer be at the talks in Managua? The soldiers closest to Enrique Bermudez, those he took into confidence, the soldiers who held a hard-line; instead of Tono and Fernando. We know Tono and Fernando are not the Nicaraguan Government's friends, because they struggled against the government; they may have done anything as part of their dirty war—but at least on 23 March they could overcome their own difficulties and sign a peace agreement, and now they have disappeared.

Finally, the independence of the politicians, the members of the contra Directorate, seems to have disappeared. Though it is true that on 23 March they could separate themselves from the aggressive policies of the Reagan administration's delegates and sign a peace agreement despite the administration's opposition, we now know—it has been made public in the United States—that the day they traveled to Nicaragua to begin this round of talks they met with Mr Reagan. The contra Directorate is now apparently being advised on what positions it must adopt during this round of talks. According to U.S. newspapers today, at their meeting with Mr Reagan the contra Directorate promised not to sign anything with the Nicaraguan Government. We are in a position where it seems as if the contra military and politicians are depending on the hard-line, the hard-line established by Enrique Bermudez, the hard-line established by the Reagan administration.

Nevertheless, we are not going to lose the hope of reaching an agreement, because if those people, one or two of them, were capable of separating from those negative forces on 23 March and sign a peace agreement, if one or two of them were capable of this, then there is hope that another two will be capable of the same. Therefore, we will continue insisting on our proposals regarding the extension of the cease-fire, the end of offensive military operations for an additional 30 days. [Words indistinct] humanitarian aid. We will continue insisting on a temporary solution for the supply of food for the contras, if they accept the International Red Cross, which in reality no one can accuse of being a partisan or friend of the Nicaraguan Government. It is an organization that no one can accuse of having problems of integrity or honesty.

In reality the organization recommended OAS Secretary General Joao Clemente Baena Soares for the signing of the Sapoa agreement. I only said that it would be the ideal organization to distribute the humanitarian aid to the contras. We are going to continue insisting that the contras sign a definitive peace agreement with all the guarantees they need to freely participate in Nicaragua's political life, to participate in the elections, and should they win, to take over the government. The government is willing to give them all the necessary assurances that there will be democratic elections in this country and that they have no reason or justification to refuse to discuss a definite cease-fire.

It seems as if the contras' hard-line position has prevailed, and it seems as if during this round they will only insist on avoiding discussions regarding definitive peace. We will not lose hope. We have held rounds of talks in the Dominican Republic; San Jose, Costa Rica; and Guatemala, where their hard-line also prevailed, but we were able to achieve the Sapoa peace agreement. We are hopeful and will continue working for peace, and we will not lose sight of the fact that as Central Americans all Nicaraguans are interested in achieving definitive peace in Nicaragua. We hope that within a short time the contras will be able to free themselves of the negative forces opposed to Sapoa.

[Reporter, in English] I have a question for Paul Reichler in English. Paul, could you just briefly express to us the thinking of the Sandinista delegation in proposing the immediate use of humanitarian aid for the contra fighters inside Nicaragua?

[Riechler, in English] The contras have been stating publicly that the regular forces inside Nicaragua are short of food and are faced with imminent starvation. While there is conflicting evidence that there is such a problem, the Government of Nicaragua does not want the irregular forces to be suffering from hunger while the peace negotiations go on, and want to contribute to the atmosphere of good will, of good faith, of reconciliation, and because the question of the supply of the humanitarian aid has been tied up with the negotiations, it is a very difficult question regarding the final cease-fire and the modus operandi that we have incorporated therein. For that reason the aid has not been able to flow in a manner that is consistent with the supply agreement.

The government decided, first as a humanitarian gesture and as a gesture of reconciliation, but also as a way of relieving the pressure on the negotiation, to come to some rapid conclusion because of the question of the hunger of the contras, to resolve that issue on an interim basis for 30 days, which would commence as early as today or tomorrow. The Red Cross is ready, willing, and able to deliver the aid. This will allow the aid to relieve whatever hunger situation exists on the part of the contras, contribute to reconciliation among the (?rebellious) forces, and finally, it will permit the negotiations to go forward on the definitive cease-fire without the question that each day that we have it hanging over our heads, that each day that we delay reaching an agreement, it exacerbates the hunger problem that the contra forces are experiencing.

[Reporter] Vice president [as heard], the Nicaraguan Government proposed and still proposes the achievement of a definitive agreement. Nevertheless, such a document would attempt to overcome this stumbling block as a provisional document or agreement within 30 days. This means that on the one hand you are talking about the modus operandi that was left pending in Sapoa, while on the other the International Red Cross humanitarian aid would include the seven zones of 21,000 square km. How would this be done?

The first thing that must be seen is the following: Yesterday or today, some contra members portrayed our proposal as seeking to break up Sapoa or the modus operandi. We therefore insist that in saying that our proposal for a definitive cease-fire continues to be there, and we will continue to negotiate it today and tomorrow. This proposal is only to resolve the problem of supplies; in other words, this is not a proposal on the modus operandi, because the modus operandi must be included in the definitive agreement. This is so because, what is the modus operandi for? The modus operandi is to be able to settle in a zone. And to do so for what purpose? To eventually receive supplies in a more permanent form. But it is essentially to settle in a zone to rejoin the national political life in an orderly way; in other words, to rejoin the country's political life. The modus operandi is not only designed to bring food to those zones. The modus operandi is the first step leading to the reintegration into political life, the return to civilian life. This supply proposal is not a modus operandi, because there are no zones. It does not include a series of aspects dealing with the modus operandi, which are more complex and involve the definitive cease-fire. This is a provisional proposal to temporarily resolve a specific problem, which is their claim that the contras are hungry.

So, we say: Let us resolve that problem, and let us continue talking. In other words, in theory, this could be approved. Food could (?be supplied) to the contras' irregular forces and then we could approve an agreement on a modus operandi that will more clearly defined the zones where they will be established and where they can receive some type of humanitarian aid in order to pass to the definitive phase, which is reintegration into national political life. This is not a modus operandi or a rejection of a modus operandi. We will continue discussing this. We are trying to reach agreement on how we approve the entire package. This is only a proposal to provisionally resolve the problem of hunger.

[Reporter] Mr Vice Foreign Minister, this morning some of the contra leaders made statements on the radio. Azucena Ferrey said they have two proposals for today. She said those proposals concerned the possibility of reaching agreements on the modus operandi. I would like you to comment on this. In addition, both Ferrey and Calero have said they are facing movement limitations. Calero said they want to be able to meet with opposition groups, including the Democratic Coordinating Board [CDN], or that those groups be allowed to go to meet with them. What can you tell us about this?

[Tinoco] If they have proposals on the modus operandi, we are willing to continue discussing them.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] for today?

[Tinoco] They have not yet presented any proposal. I do not know if during the 20 or 30 minutes I have been here they presented one. If they do present a proposal on the modus operandi, we will discuss it as part of the overall package of negotiations. That is no problem at all. We said we want to continue negotiating the overall package. Our proposal was only a temporary solution to the food problem. If they present a proposal, we will discuss it. We are not against new proposals. What was your second question?

[Reporter] It deals with the problem of movement limitation the contra leaders are facing. They said there is no sense coming to Nicaragua if they cannot move freely.

[Tinoco] I can tell you one thing. We discussed this issue for a long time at the previous meeting when they first came to Managua. You must recall that our basic argument is that they came to Managua as representatives of an armed rebel force to negotiate with the Nicaraguan Government. They did not come here to conduct a

political campaign, because they are not a political party, such as the Independent Liberal Party or any other party that can launch a political campaign. No country in the world would let an armed group conduct a political campaign. Obviously, they did not come here to conduct a political campaign. However, we agreed to some visits they wanted to make, including their their visit to the Espiscopal Conference, etc. We tried to somehow resolved the problem in that way. I can tell you that this problem was not raised at yesterday's meeting. They did not made any kind of request yesterday.

[Reporter] Mr Tinoco, we know the national dialogue, which is currently at an impasse, [words indistinct] is linked to your dialogue with the contra movement. We imagine that the latter is also at an impasse and that the second phase of this dialogue is the incorporation of the Nicaraguan Resistance into the national dialogue. There have been three attempts to hold a dialogue between the government and the opposition. The first one I think was in 1980; the second one took place 2 years ago; and the third one has just been practically broken. We imagine the RN may suggest changing the Sandinist government representative to the national dialogue—when it joins the dialogue and the second phase is therefore accomplished—because Nicaraguan politicians themselves describe Commander Nunez as a dialogue killer. Do you think you could reach an agreement with the RN on this?

[Tinoco] Obviously the problem of the national dialogue is linked to our work here, because of the political problems the national dialogue will discuss in the future. As you know, the suspension of the dialogue by the opposition parties is very strange, especially because I think the leftist parties have been deceived [words indistinct] by the rightist parties. The rightist parties [words indistinct] because the [words indistinct] CDN, for example, is interested in incorporating the contras into the national dialogue. When the contra movement joins the dialogue, the CDN will ally with it [words indistinct]. The CDN has never been interested in the progress of the dialogue. It is waiting for the incorporation of the contras, and it somehow deceived the leftist opposition parties and sold its argument to them. The CDN probably told them that because of the strike of the 400 construction workers, there could not be any dialogue. That is absurd. There are strikes of hundreds and thousands of workers all over the world, which is no reason to stop discussing political problems. In any case, the CDN deceived the leftist opposition parties with this argument. It told them the CDN would support their strike, but the truth is that the Nicaraguan civic ultraright represented by the CDN succeeded in suspending the dialogue to create a negative atmosphere in our own talks with the contras to wait until the contras can join the political dialogue.

The election of the representative each side will have obviously concerns each side. That is a power and an option each side has. Who will the contras send to the national dialogue when a final agreement has been reached? That is certainly not up to the FSLN or any other party to decide.

[Reporter] I am [name indistinct] from Mexican radio and television. Mr Tinoco, yesterday [words indistinct] Ortega referred to the contras as counterrevolutionaries and reactionaries. You referred to them as the Resistance. Are not both things a political contradiction in the FSLN? The other question is: The government wants the contras to join the opposition political parties and to lead a civilian, democratic life, but the contras do not [words indistinct] do not want peace. Is it possible to reach a complete political agreement regarding the entire contra situation?

[Tinoco] Your question is how... [changes thought] You are pointing out the difficulties in reaching a cease-fire agreement...

[Reporter, interrupting] My first question was: The word resistance...

[Tinoco, interrupting] I can clarify that. We have pointed out before that the word contra is an abbreviation of the word counterrevolution. Therefore, the contras are counterrevolutionaries; they continue to be just that. In the framework of the agreements, when a formal proposal is made we call them by the name they like to be called. They like to be called the National Resistance. Therefore, in a proposal to the contras, we cannot refer to them as contras, because they dislike that name. That is why we refer to the contras as the RN when we make a proposal to them. However, this does not mean there is a political contradiction. It is simply a problem of how they want to be called.

Mercenaries or not, I believe they as a group have responded and acted like a mercenary group at the service of the policies of a world power, in this case the U.S. Government. In this regard, their policy and the role they have played has been one of a mercenary. In addition to this, they are counterrevolutionaries, because they are being used as mercenaries to destroy and to act against this revolution. That is why we only refer to them as the Resistance in the framework of the formal agreements. If we have to reach an agreement with them, we have to call them by the name they want to be called. However, this does not change their real political and ideological status.

General Ortega's asking them to work for a political agreement to achieve peace and to join the political life of the country does not mean that contradictions will disappear; it does not mean they will stop being against the revolution. It will simply mean they will be changing the military struggle for the political struggle. Hopefully, they will be convinced of this need because they know that the military struggle has no possibility of success in a country whose people are willing to defend this process. That is the answer to your first question.

[Reporter] Mr Tinoco, it is possible that the counterrevolution will accept the proposal made by Nicaragua regarding the delivery of aiid. It is possible they will place some obstacles in the way before accepting the IRC, as it has done before. They may insist on choosing another organization to handle the delivery of this aid. This has something to do with their intentions to rearm themselves during this cease-fire period. Yesterday Bermudez announced there would be another offensive beginning on 1 June, when the cease-fire expires. What would Nicaragua's reaction be if the contras reject the IRC?

[Tinoco] You have talked about different topics. First, the main issue is that the Sapoa agreements are fundamentally an offer to these irregular forces to transfer their political differences with the revolution from the military to the political sphere. This proposal and this peace effort have been made by the government, not because the government is militarily weak or because it is concerned about the counterrevolution's military activity, but because we are trying to prevent futher bloodshed in Nicaragua; they are being offered a political alternative. Obviously, if they break up this agreement [words indistinct] this would mean Bermudez is repeating what Abrams or someone else from the U.S. Administration has told him. It would mean that the people would simply have no other option but to resolve this political contradiction by military means, because the political means did not work.

The Nicaraguan people will have to use all their strength to militarily resolve this political contradiction in the shortest time possible. Through the Sapoa agreements, we are trying to avoid this type of solution and find a political solution by offering these forces who have political differences with the revolution a political opportunity to act and to disagree with us, precisely because this revolution is pluralistic. The revolution gives others the opportunity to disagree and to share their different points of view.

If they reject the IRC, we cannot see how they can justify it. We are talking about the IRC, which was founded and is directed by Switzerland, a neutral country par excellence. If the counterrevolution wants, they may request the arrival of 100 or 200 Swiss people to distribute the aid. We do not believe it is a problem for us. If they reject that offer, it would mean they really do not care about resolving the hunger problem among their forces. It would mean their goal was to stop the overall cease-fire agreement with the pretext of a modus operandi proposed by them only. It would mean they are not really interested in making progress or that maybe they are not really having a hunger problems, because they may be receiving food from Honduras or some other place. We hope they reconsider, because this is a serious proposal that can resolve the problem of the distribution of humanitarian aid to those who are having problems. The zones are the appropriate areas, because the contras operate near those areas: Quilali, (Iwaskarma), (Las Fonseca), La Pinuela, etc. Those are areas where humanitarian aid can easily be sent. Ways can be found for the IRC to deliver the supplies to the people who need it.

[Reporter] (Mr Paul Hindel) said if the contras were to win the next elections in Nicaragua, they could assume power in government. I would like to ask the vice foreign minister if he shares that viewpoint?

[Tinoco] Yes, I agree with that viewpoint. However, I do not believe the contras can win...

[Reporter; interrupting] I do not believe it, either.

[Tinoco] If the contras became a political party, they would just be another right-wing political party, just as there are six or seven other right-wing political parties. We do not believe the majority of Nicaraguan people will vote—which is the essence of democracy—for a right-wing political party, because it would be against their fundamental, economic interests. We do not believe the majority of Nicaraguan peasants and workers will vote for businessmen, oligarchs, and landowners who exploited them in this country for decades. This does not mean the contras will not be given a political opportunity. Thank you very much.

Bermudez Denies RN Division

PA2904150388 Managua Radio Corporacion in Spanish 0400 GMT 29 Apr 88

[Interview with Colonel Enrique Bermudez, chief of the Nicaraguan Resistance armed forces, by correspondent Jose Castillo Osejo on 29 April; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Castillo] We will now interview Colonel Enrique Bermudez, chief of the Nicaraguan Resistance armed forces, regarding some events in Managua and the dialogue that will begin today at 1000, 6 minutes from now. Col Bermudez, it is being constantly said that there are deep differences among the RN military and political sectors. We want to hear your direct report. What has happened, what is being done, and what is the situation? Go ahead, Colonel.

[Bermudez] There are no deep differences among us as the Sandinist Front's propaganda claims. There is no division between the RN's military and political sectors. Yesterday we published a communique in which we stated our support for all the negotiating efforts that the RN Political Directorate will carry out in Managua today.

We are convinced that for totalitarian systems, psychological weapons play a very important role in this type of war. The disinformation campaign is used to discourage the people's struggle and to try to destroy the morale of our combatants and the monolithic unity and cohesion of our forces. Therefore, the Nicaraguan people should remain calm and understand that the combatants and

the Political Directorate form a single body of armed political struggle to give the people democracy and freedom. We are (?united). We are also united with the Nicaraguan people [words indistinct]. We are also united with [words indistinct]. Therefore, any problem that emerges is resolved democratically, and we reach democratic solutions.

[Castillo] Do you think that an agreement will be reached in this second round of talks?

[Bermudez] As we have been saying for many years, war or peace is in the hands of the Sandinists. On 13 January 1983, we proposed a dialogue to the Sandinist regime. The proposal established a number of points with which we would feel satisfied. They were steps that would lead to Nicaragua's total democratization. After that date, we made other proposals to achieve peace in Nicaragua. The Sandinists are the ones who have never appreciated these proposals and have never given them the least importance. It is not until many years later, after a great loss of Nicaraguan lives and damage, that they are sitting down at the negotiating table. However, we understand that, to date, the Sandinist regime has not taken (?steps) to achieve a peaceful and democratic resolution of the Nicaraguan problem. There is no reason why we should believe that Sandinist promises [words indistinct].

We accepted the 60-day truce, but, of course, in exchange, the Sandinists would permit the supplying of our forces. [Words indistinct] that is a tacit violation of the Sapoa agreements and, therefore, the Sandinists continue breaking their promises. To date, I have not seen any sign that the Sandinists have any intention of achieving peace. What I see is that they are using this time as a tactic to recover from their great attrition, to modify their defenses, to reinforce their positions, to make preparations, to obtain some type of economic support from the European countries, to obtain a breather, and then to begin to beat up the people, as I learned from news about their actions against a workers union yesterday.

[Castillo] From your remarks, we can see that even before the Esquipulas II accord, the RN was already making proposals to achieve a consolidated peace with the Sandinists and that they were not taken into account by the Sandinists. In light of the fact that all that time has elapsed from when the RN began making peace proposals until now, when a dialogue should begin at 1000 today, won't a clear peace agreement be reached in this round of talks?

[Bermudez] First of all, we have always been willing to reach a peaceful negotiated solution; we have always been willing to hold a political dialogue. Documents exist containing countless proposals sent to the Sandinist regime. We have never had any signal from the Sandinist regime's Army about being willing to hold a dialogue and find a definitive solution to the problem.

Ferrey Rejects Extension

PA2904191388 Managua Radio Noticias in Spanish 1200 GMT 29 Apr 88

[Text] The government has proposed extending the cease-fire truce for 30 days. Nicaraguan Resistance leader Azucena Ferrey says that the next step now should be aimed at making progress in the negotiations that will be renewed today at 0900.

Azucena Ferrey, member of the RN Directorate, explains why her organization disagrees with the government's proposal:

[Begin Ferrey recording] With regard to the proposal of the representative of the Sandinist Front's Army, party, and government regarding the need for extending the cease-fire truce, we have said the cease-fire in effect now is not over yet and they are already thinking about extending it. This leads us to believe the Sandinist Front does not have the political will to comply with some points of the Sapoa agreement. We have said here the modus operandi part must not be conditioned on the signing of a cease-fire agreement because this necessarily leads to [words indistinct] regarding democratization, the national dialogue, and national reconciliation. [passage indistinct]

This war will not end until the reasons that provoked the war are eliminated, and those reasons are: the lack of freedom, the lack of human rights guarantees, the repression and violation of human rights, and the state of submission into which the Army, party, and government of the Sandinist Front have pushed the Nicaraguan people so that the Front may stay in power. [end recording]

Calero on Concessions

PA3004152888 Paris AFP in Spanish 0607 GMT 30 Apr 88

[Text] Managua, 29 Apr (AFP)—Today the Nicaraguan Resistance (RN) contested a Nicaraguan Government proposal to have the International Red Cross channel U.S. humanitarian aid to the guerrillas.

The announcement was made by rebel leader Adolfo Calero, one of the five RN directors who is participating in the negotiations with the Managua government to agree on a definitive cease-fire in Nicaragua.

In addition, the contras' political leader said that "in an effort to facilitate the peace talks," the RN has decided to give up its demand for a guarantee of military supplies for its forces during a truce that will expire on 1 June.

Calero said that "with this we are helping to facilitate" the peace negotiations.

However, the negotiations seemed to have stalled with the RN's rejection of a Sandinist proposal that the Red Cross, and not an organization appointed by AID, should be in charge of channeling the humanitarian aid approved by the U.S. Congress.

The rebels also said that within the framework of the efforts to hasten the talks for a cease-fire, they have decided to recognize the Nicaraguan territory's "sovereignty and indivisibility," as demanded by the Nicaraguan Constitution.

This relates to the areas where the RN troops should gather during the temporary cease-fire, which has been in effect since 1 April.

Joint Commission Formed

PA3004134488 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1200 GMT 30 Apr 88

[Text] Managua (ANN)—A commission composed of eight members of the Nicaraguan Government and the counterrevolutionary Directorate worked last night to reconcile the proposals made by both sides to unfetter the definitive cease-fire negotiations process. Vice Foreign Minister Victor Hugo Tinoco, Augusto Zamora, National Assembly Secretary Rafael Solis, and Lieutenant Colonel Javier Carrion, chief of the 6th military region, comprise the Nicaraguan Government delegation. Participating for the contra leadership are Alejandro Montiel Arguello, Rene Herrera, Roberto Ferrey, and Commander Max.

The commission will study the government's proposals, which maintain that the negotiating process should be handled as a whole, including the areas where the counterrevolutionary forces will be stationed, their modus operandi, humanitarian aid, the country's democratization—which must be discussed at the national dialogue with the counterrevolutionary delegates—and finally the contras' reintegration into the country's socioeconomic and political life.

Meanwhile, the contra Directorate is attempting to divide the process in phases. They are currently attempting to only negotiate the modus operandi of their armed groups, including in the discussion of the modus operandi the humanitarian aid and the neutral organization that will distribute the supplies.

H. Ortega on Outcome

PA0105020988 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 2243 GMT 30 Apr 88

[News conference held by Defense Minister Humberto Ortega with local and foreign reporters at the Camino Real Hotel in Managua—live]

[Text] [Ortega] We have just concluded a meeting of the round of talks between the government and counterrevolutionary delegations in Managua. We wish to point out that we discussed at length everything related to the two proposals up for discussion. The important aspect of these talks is that an ad hoc joint commission, which worked last night, determined the points for today's discussion. As the result of this, at 0800 today we were able to start considering 16 of the 32 points of the Nicaraguan Government's permanent cease-fire proposal. This is the most important aspect of this round of talks. Based on the Nicaraguan Government's proposal, we made progress and agreed on 16 of the 32 points ... our proposal.

We must point out, however, that important points still have to be discussed. We have to consider them in coming meetings. In this way we will try to conclude this process of analysis and discussion, which will make it possible for us to reach an agreement on the 32 points of the government's proposal.

We think that if we work constructively, we will make more progress in the next meeting. I repeat, however, that the most important points still have to be discussed at greater length. This requires more time, but we have always voiced our disposition to work as long as necessary. We understand, however, that they have only a limited time. Some points—for instance, the introduction to our proposal—outlined our positions in the democratic framework of Esquipulas II, which we must strengthen and develop. To our surprise, they readily accepted some such points. They used to insist that our government would not make a democratic commitment. When we expressed our commitment to strengthen the democratic process according to Esquipulas II and universal democratic principles and asked for them to do the same, however, they retreated. Consequently, we have failed to reach agreement on this point. This does not mean, however, that we cannot reach an agreement in the future.

We must also say that the meetings, as we progressed toward the most important points, became somewhat more tense, and the two sides' contradictory positions became more evident. This result is interesting to some extent. We are convinced that the line of Elliott Abrams and Enrique Bermudez, expressed through a number of positions in this meeting, did not permit us to move forward as fast as we expected. It is also clear an important agreement like the one we are trying to reach cannot be reached in so short a time.

Undoubtedly, Abrams' guidelines and the warmongering position of Bermudez' group contributed to bringing about moments of tension and the unclear position of the counterrevolutionaries during the last minutes of the meeting. As you know, those gentlemen, who belong to the U.S. Administration's most reactionary and warmongering groups, are desperately bent on defeating the Sapoa agreement and imposing the venturesome, desperate, warmongering line of former National Guard member Enrique Bermudez.

They refused to sign a joint communique summarizing what happened at this meeting. They also refused to establish the place of the next meeting, because they now claim the meeting must be held outside Nicaragua, be it in Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, or any other country. We believe this shows irresponsibility, because in the past they always asked to hold this kind of meeting in Nicaragua. We believe it is our duty and the government's duty to continue these negotiations here in Nicaragua.

In the next few days and through the existing communication channels, they will inform us of their final decision on our decision to hold the next meetings in Nicaragua. The exact site will be established in the next few days. As to the date, we agreed in principle on 12, 13, and 14 May, provided that Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo is available. OAS Secretary General Baena Suarez said he was available on those days, but Cardinal Obando y Bravo was not at the meeting, so we must find out whether he will be available on those days.

There were no major problems over the date of the next meeting, but we had problems agreeing on the meeting's venue. We said we must meet here in Managua or in some other place [in Nicaragua]. They will respond to this proposal in the next few days.

We presented a government proposal and handed it to the witnesses. It is a proposed joint communique summarizing what had happened in these 3 days of meetings. The proposed joint communique includes the Nicaraguan Government's opinion of this meeting, as you will see for yourselves. The joint communique proposal reads as follows:

Joint communique proposal

The top-level Nicaraguan Government delegation and the top-level RN delegation met in Managua on 28, 29, and 30 April to fulfill the 23 March Sapoa agreement. The two delegations report the following:

1. Within the framework of frank and direct talks concerning the implementation of the Sapoa agreement, we formed a joint commission to reconcile the two sides' proposals. We agreed to use the Nicaraguan Government proposal as the basis for the joint commission's talks, and we made significant progress, because 16 of the 32 points were approved.

2. To avoid more deaths and to conclude the necessary negotiations in a serious, realistic manner, we agreed to extend the cessation of offensive military operations for another month until 30 June 1988.

3. In view of the Nicaraguan Government delegation's reiterated request for the release of those kidnapped by the RN forces, the RN delegation promised to release the aforementioned citizens in the next few days.

4. We discussed the topic of the necessary humanitarian aid for the RN rebel forces to avoid allowing the need for food and medicine to hinder the peace process and, quote, to allow the continuation of the negotiations for a permanent cease-fire, unquote, a task that the Sapoa agreement in its second paragraph, point 2, assigned to this meeting. We signed a temporary agreement to ask the Red Cross to immediately begin the distribution of the humanitarian aid until 30 May 1988.

5. The Nicaraguan Government and the RN demand the U.S. Government end its embargo against Nicaragua for the benefit of the Nicaraguan people and support the peace process.

6. The verification commission formed by the Sapoa agreement was established and began working when the aforementioned agreement was signed. The speed and responsibility with which this commission conducted the, quote, technical assistance and services, unquote, the Sapoa agreement entrusted to the OAS secretary general is recognized.

7. To avoid misunderstandings and incidents and to protect human life, we agreed on a daily exchange of information through Telefax.

8. The Nicaraguan Government told the RN that it plans to discuss the following topics at the national dialogue:

a. Guarantees for municipal, Central American parliament, and general elections in 1990. This includes making necessary amendments to the electoral law and the pluralist formation of the Supreme Electoral Council.

b. Issuance of ID cards for Nicaraguan citizens.

c. Establishment of dates for municipal elections.

d. Participation of parties not represented in the Assembly in the country's institutional life.

e. Guarantees and norms for the functionning of the mixed economy. These guarantees will cover the various forms of property, including public, private, cooperative, associational, and communal properties.

This meeting will continue in permanent session. The next top-level commission meeting will be held in Managua on 15, 16, 17, and 18 May 1988.

Signatures

Humberto Ortega, Nicaraguan Government representative

Adolfo Calero, RN representative.

This is the government proposal we presented to them. As I already told you, they did reject all the points. We finally agreed on a date for the next meeting during the few last

minutes of the meeting. They also said they will make their final decision on the venue of the next meeting, which as we clearly said should be in Nicaragua.

Although the meeting ended in this way, the Nicaraguan Government does not feel we cannot make any more progress. This simply means that as we probe the central points and the key problems, contradictions become more tense. But all pacts are difficult to reach, especially when one is seeking a true peace pact. We can truly appreciate things only when they are difficult to achieve. Our government reiterates its willingness to continue working responsibly for the sake of peace. We warn our people and the world about the policy of boycott, sabotage, blackmail, and pressure conducted by Elliott Abrams, the little hawk, and Enrique Bermudez, his colonel of the Somozist Guard, aiming to undermine the peace agreement.

[Moderator] Questions now.

[Reporter] [Passage indistinct] Has the presence of Commanders Quiche and Max, who are Col Bermudez' closest collaborators, hindered or helped the work carried out in this meeting?

[Ortega] We cannot only consider their position, or the position of the part of the delegation they represent. As a whole, the the RN delegation's positions are burdened with pressures and positions that we believe do not contribute to seeking an atmosphere of greater trust to reach permanent, definite agreements.

Undoubtedly, the presence of counterrevolutionary leaders Quiche and Max, who are Bermudez' followers, makes negotiations more difficult. As we all know, Commanders Tono and Fernando did not attend these talks. They signed the Sapoa agreement, and we know they were removed from their important positions in the counterrevolutionary military structure, as were as other important leaders such as Rigoberto. We know very well that there is a great division at the heart of the RN. Over 20 contra leaders oppose Bermudez's counterrevolutionary faction.

Undoubtedly, the presence of Bermudez' faction in the talks made it more difficult to reach the agreement we all long for.

We intend to try to make these people on the Directorate comply with the commitment they made at Sapoa.

[Reporter] General, is continuing the talks in Managua a sine qua non condition for the negotiation of a definitive cease-fire?

[Ortega] We will learn about their final position in a few days. When they have expressed their final position, we will also be able to reply to you more clearly. We think, however, that it is very clear to the world, the witnesses, and our people that they have been demanding that these meetings be held in Managua. It would now be irresponsible and entirely illogical to meet outside Managua. This would not be consistent with the government's position. Such top-level meetings should not be held outside Nicaragua. Nevertheless, we could hold preliminary meetings outside of Nicaragua. In fact, we have already established there will be [talks outside of Nicaragua]. But the top-level meetings must be held, according to our government, here in Nicaragua.

[Pastora] General of the Army, Joaquin Absalon Pastora would like to ask you two questions. The first one is this: Is there any possibility of holding a tripartite dialogue between the Nicaraguan civic opposition, the Nicaraguan Resistance armed opposition, and the FSLN as part of the democratization of Nicaragua? The second is this: What was the position of Commander Quiche during this meeting? He was reportedly a sort of plenipotentiary ambassador for Col Bermudez.

[Ortega] As for the first question, none at all. As for Quiche, we saw he acted typically like any counterrevolutionary leader who follows the rather controversial line of his leader, former Somozist guard Bermudez.

[Reporter] We understand that the revolutionary government has voiced its willingness to discuss the accusations [not further identified] and asserted that in Nicaragua there is, essentially, democracy. We also understand that the RN delegation has been asked to submit a list of their proposals. Has this list been presented? If so, what do you have to say about it?

[Ortega] They have never presented any list. We have always made it clear that, according to Esquipulas and Sapoa, this kind of top-level meeting is only to negotiate the definitive cease-fire. We have also said in the framework of this negotiation that we are willing to listen to their views on several topics, including democratization, which I think they stressed the most. So in our proposal, as you can see, there is a preamble where we reiterate Nicaragua's desire for democracy. [Words indistinct] after Sapoa, a national dialogue (?is in order). As a result of this, they and the country's democratic forces can hold talks to help strengthen the existing democratic development in Nicaragua, which is revealed by an (?intelligent) proposal.

[Reporter] General, I am [name indistinct] of AFP. Why is it illogical for the contras to meet at a place other than Nicaragua at present? Also, why have you just said that in principle you refuse to talk outside Nicaragua? You somehow leave open a chance for these talks to take place outside Nicaragua.

[Ortega] I answered your question dealing with holding talks outside Managua. I said that in principle this would be dependent on what they would say. We meant out of Managua. We think that to meet out of Nicaragua would make no sense. We would then go backward. The logical thing would be to move forward, not only in the topics

discussed, but also in the atmosphere of the negotiations. [passage indistinct] We think the discusssions should go on here in Managua. This would be the proper thing to do. So we will await their reply. They say they are not given a chance by the Nicaraguan Government here in Managua to carry out political activities [words indistinct]. We told them they can do these things when there is substantial progress in the agreeements. [passage indistinct]

[Reporter] I have a question I should really ask the contras; it deals with the kidnapped. Mr Calero said in a previous meeting that on the initiative of his spiritual guide, Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, they would settle the problem of the kidnapped. When they are asked about the people they are holding, they refuse to say how many they have, where they have them, what they will do with them, and whether they will release them or not. This is a question you could settle because you may have discussed it. Also, has the Nicaraguan Government, through its representatives, changed its mind, after this meeting, regarding humanitarian aid for the counterrevolutionaries?

[Ortega] Referring to... [changes thought] I will answer the last question. I have already read the communique that includes the proposal we presented to them. This answers your question, no? We reasserted the issues concerning the Red Cross' special method to provide supplies, which you all know about, until we reach a definite agreement based on the proposals. Referring to the kidnapped people, every time we met with them—and not only when we met with them but every time we have established contact with them—we insisted that they must fulfill our people's demands. In other words, they must release the kidnapped people they still have or provide information about the kidnapped people. The last time we met they pledged to release a certain number of kidnapped people before coming to the meeting we have just concluded. However, they did not fulfill their pledge. We pointed out that they had failed to fulfill their pledge and they said they will try to fulfill their pledge in the near future.

[Reporter] General, what specific reasons did the contra delegation give for not signing the... [corrects himself] for not issuing the joint declaration, which includes part of their proposal? Second, could you possibly provide more details about the contras' refusal to continue the talks in Nicaragua?

[Ortega] Well, you have learned about their position in other meetings. They refuse to extend the time we agreed to cease military operations. We told them it was necessary to extend it an additional 30 days because we agreed to a 60-day period and we only have 30 days left. If we need 60 days to implement the agreement, once we sign it, then the logical thing would be to agree to replace the days we have lost, so to speak. However, they did not want to make up for the time lost by extending the 30-day deadline. They argued that it is possible to attain an agreement in the remaining 30 days. However, that position is really covering up Bermudez' position and plans to extend the talks and increase the pressure—because the time we agreed to cease military operations would be over—and this would preclude an agreement.

That would practically bring us to a confrontation, because as we approach the end of the time we agreed to cease military operations, their forces and ours will logically become tense. The danger of a clash increases as time goes by; everyone becomes more tense because they know the fighting will resume. Consequently, they are playing with this type of problem. It is illogical for them not to accept an extension of the deadline. Likewise, Mr Wischnewski, who is our adviser, clearly proved that, based on the assumption that we would sign an agreement today, it was necessary to extend the 30-day deadline to fulfill the agreement. However, they did not understand this.

Referring to the other question, concerning material aid to their irregular forces inside the country, they always refused... [changes thought] one of them once said the International Red Cross was manipulated by the great powers and international organizations, so it was not neutral, etc. They always refused to discuss the issue.

[Reporter] General, could you tell us if there is any other reason, aside from what you have just said, why they do not want to continue the talks in Managua?

[Ortega] I already told you. They have always wanted to come here as a government delegation, like a visiting president with all his retinue. They want us to arrange visits for them to embassies, receptions, [words indistinct] at the Cesar Augusto Silva Convention Center, etc. They even said they wanted to meet with the Democratic Coordinating Board. We told them: You share the CDN's beliefs; what is it that you need to know about it? They said: We want to meet with the Nicaraguan opposition, and we told them: You are the Nicaraguan opposition and you are here talking. Your true opponents are us.

As on other occasions, they want to exercise a right they never won [words indistinct]. Their armed forces, their armed contras do not control one single town, so they cannot claim they have a right to conduct specific political activities in those towns. Their military forces are not here in Managua forcing us to accept their military actions. They are, therefore, asking for things they never won. They are still a force that, according to Esquipulas, cannot conduct any other kind of activity except for that which we are carrying out now, which is the cease-fire process.

[Reporter] Mr Ortega, some international reports comment on the problems within the contra movement. You already mentioned the situation of over 20 counterrevolutionary military leaders, led apparently by Rigoberto, who oppose Bermudez' position. Apparently, some Honduran radio reports have said that if the Sandinist Army

lets him, Rigoberto is willing to come to Managua to publicly explain his problem with Bermudez within the framework of the cease-fire negotiations. What can you say about this? In addition, I would like you to comment on the slightly conflictive situation between AID and the OAS, and on the problem concerning the part of the aid that supposedly belongs to the verification commission.

[Ortega] If they let us know through adequate channels that that [Rigoberto's willingness to talk] is absolutely true, we will certainly take everything into account and will respond to them.

Concerning the AID, we know very well that Reagan and his people are constantly trying to sabotage our process and that they will continue sabotaging everything the Sapoa agreement requires. As long as there is no greater pressure on the U.S. behavior in Honduras concerning the aid it is supplying to the contra warmongering faction headed by Bermudez, we will always have a problem there.

We do not have detailed information on the OAS support problem. The OAS secretary general is the best person to respond to that question, because I do not know very much about it.

[Reporter] General, can you tell us what the 15 [as heard] points are in which you [and the RN] agreed on?

[Ortega] We are going to distribute a copy of those points now. We reached a consensus on those points. However, we did not sign an agreement, and at the end of the meeting they clearly said we should consider the consensus as an almost total meeting of minds, not an agreement, although it was practically an agreement. We reached a consensus on important points, but they are not the essential, main points of the Nicaraguan Government proposal. We will distribute a copy of those points now to save time.

[Reporter] Was this meeting a success or a failure or is there an in-between result...?

[Ortega, interrupting] Things do not have to be either black or white...

[Reporter, interrupting] Is there an in-between result for the next meeting?

[Ortega] Things do not have to be either black or white to avoid saying black or red. [sentence as heard]

[Reporter] Is there an in-between result?

[Ortega] Things are not totally one way or the other. There is a little bit of both ...

[Reporter, interrupting] Is there an inclination one way or the other?

[Ortega] Sometimes things seem to be going one way and suddenly they change course. [laughter] It is true that it is a difficult and complex situation. We are opponents and we have to exercise a lot of control. The main thing is that we are talking. We met in Sapoa over 1 month ago. Many things have happened since then. They have shown many contradictions.

Definitely, the process of inflicting a strategic defeat on the mercenary forces carrying out Reagan's policy has increased tremendously, especially after Sapoa. Logically, this is the result of all that: the previous negotiations and the contras' military situation. You are all aware of that situation. Therefore, we can seriously say that we have attained progress; we have discussed the most important problems. Logically, those problems can be solved once we discuss and analyze them, but they create a tense atmosphere and cause clashes. There is thunder and lightning, no? But well, we are trying to solve the problems.

There is always the danger that the other party, instead of trying to make something constructive out of our points of disagreement, might attempt to make something destructive out of them. That would of course destroy the possibility of further discussion. The danger is always there; we cannot deny this.

So we have to be constantly struggling, on the one hand, with the sectors that are most involved in the talks, with whom we have many points of disagreement, as we very well know. In other words, the fact that there is a group willing to hold talks does not mean that we do not have enormous points of disagreement. As I said, we have to contend with, on the one hand, the sector that favors negotiations but still poses many difficulties, and on the other hand, simultaneously, we have to confront the difficulties contrived by those who are here with the sole purpose of boycotting the process.

[Reporter] Commander, sooner or later you will be confronted with the question of the contras' demand concerning the separation of state, Army, and party.

[Ortega] [passage indistinct]

[Reporter] No, tell me, is that negotiable?

[Ortega] That is not part of this problem. They can think many things, they can think whatever they want. Each political group has its own political platform. The important thing is that the Nicaraguan Constitution provides the basis for democracy in this country. Afterwards, whoever wins the elections will implement his own political platform. We feel sure the people will continue to vote for revolutionary unity, led in this case by the FSLN. This was ratified during the elections where President Ortega was elected, and so we have a government here that implements this political platform. That is what it is all about.

President Ortega Delivers Labor Day Speech

PA0105174888 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1557 GMT 1 May 88

[Speech by President Daniel Ortega Saavedra during the International Labor Day rally at the Eduardo Contreras Plaza in Managua—live]

[Text] Good morning comrades, good morning Managua workers. This morning's agenda will be a short one since you do not need lengthy explanations to understand the revolutionary process in Nicaragua; you do not need lengthy speeches to know who your friends and enemies are.

First, I would like to congratulate the vanguard workers who, representing the Managua workers, received special recognition this morning. They are comrades who understand the revolutionary process, comrades who are not confused. They are comrades who do not lend themselves to the maneuvers of the enemy. Every real revolution must confront a counterrevolution. We all know who the enemy of Nicaragua is; we know who has trained the counterrevolution; we know who directs the counterrevolution—the United States of North America. The Nicaraguan worker who fights and expresses himself in the different ways demanded by the revolutionary process cannot be fooled. He knows his enemy and can point him out. He knows that the imperialist policy, the representatives of the imperialist policy in Nicaragua, the rightist groups, and the groups that call themselves leftists are his enemies. The truth is that you are not easily fooled, and this is why we have a working class that is responding to the various tasks demanded by the revolution. The revolution's main task continues to be the military defense of the revolution. We do not take our minds off this even when we are negotiating. Another of our tasks is the defense of the economy because our enemy wants to destroy us.

There are small groups of disoriented and backward workers who are being directed by people who have a counterrevolutionary plan, and it is our duty to unmask those people who are trying to manipulate the backward workers. It now turns out that the rightist sectors, the rightist newspapers, and the exploiters are the friends of the workers. Let us wait and see who is going to express support for those workers whose demands have counterrevolutionary connotations. Let us wait and see whether those small groups of workers will get the solidarity of the rightist parties or the Yankee Embassy. We would not be suprised if some so-called leftist leaders were among those workers. During the Somoza days, those so-called leftist leaders were known to hesitate and act like cowards in face of the Somozist dictatorship. [applause]

We remember a 1 May in 1962 or 1963, when the FSLN members were participating in the celebrations for the first time. When we entered the premises of the Workers Association, which today is the Sandinist Central Organization of Workers, there was a large portrait of Somoza. We had never entered that building. It was managed by Somoza and was used for certain activities, such as the 1 May activities, by the parties which claimed to be leftist, like the ones that are now involved in political activities. They carried out their activities there.

We were surprised when we saw the portrait of Somoza, and we discovered that they had their activities there quite calmly with the portrait of Somoza there. They were carrying out their activities normally. When we attempted to destroy the Somoza portrait, those pseudolabor leaders, who are inciting the workers to take up positions of demand, began to fight with us, because they said we were provocateurs because we were trying to destroy the Somoza portrait. They said that the National Guard would enter the building and massacre us all and that what we were doing was stupid.

However, we overcame their resistance, and we destroyed the Somoza portrait. This is in turn a reflection of the political concepts of those counterrevolutionary leaders. [applause] They never dared to fight to overthrow the Somoza dictatorship. In other words, they were prepared to coexist with Somoza and they did so. All they did was demand certain rights. They never proposed to take power for the workers. Therefore, they always coexisted with Somoza's picture, and now that the revolution has triumphed, instead of joining the popular forces, instead of joining the FSLN, instead of joining in the worker-peasant government, instead of joining in the people's government, they have aligned themselves with the power of the oligarchy, the power of the bourgeoisie, the power of the Yankees, the power of imperialism, the power of the CIA, and the power of the dollar. [applause]

They are again playing a sad role as agents of imperialism, because there are some labor organizations that are directed by parties that are clearly known to be rightist. It is understood that they should act in this way, but we find it inconceivable that they should still be misguided at this point.

We can only condemn those attitudes. How we would like to see the leaders of those labor organizations use the courage that they claim to have, and the valor that they claim to have, to pick up rifles and march to the battlefront. [applause] We would like to see that courage and valor lead the labor leaders of those pseudorevolutionary groups, the instruments of the CIA, to be at least willing to protest against the Yankee aggression. It is easier for them to protest against the revolution than against the Yankee aggression.

Who has extended the embargo against Nicaragua from 1 May? [crowd shouts: "Imperialism"] Who has ordered a new embargo against Nicaragua on this 1 May? [crowd shouts: "Imperialism"] It is imperialism, it is the U.S. Government that has renewed the embargo against the Nicaraguan people. Who, then, is responsible for Nicaragua's economic crisis? We are not going to say now that

it is the revolution, because it is not the revolution that destroys cooperatives. It is the Reagan counterrevolution and its propaganda media here which defend those criminal activities.

Therefore, the issue is very clear regarding those so-called strikers who find it easier to stage a strike against the revolution than against the Yankee imperialists, against the exploiters, against the reactionaries, the oligarchy, and the rightist forces who are here in Nicaragua.

After reviewing point No 1, let us go on to point No 2 dealing with peace. The workers want peace and the Nicaraguan workers are entitled to achieve peace, to decide their own economic regime, their own social regime, their own political regime. That is known as self-determination, that is called sovereignty, that is called independence. And we Nicaraguan workers are not going to accept having the Yankees, the contras, or the reactionaries—which are one and the same—coming here to tell us what kind of socioeconomic regime we Nicaraguans must have. The Nicaraguans want to have a social transformation plan in which a mixed economy and political pluralism exist. That is the decision and the will of the Nicaraguan workers. It is the workers who must decide this, it is the Nicaraguan people, the Nicaraguan workers who must decide this. If the Nicaraguan workers, if the Nicaraguan people want a regime without private property, if the Nicaraguan people want a regime in which private property does not exist, then that depends on the will of the Nicaraguan workers and not the Yankees, the oligarchy, the reactionaries. [applause] If the Nicaraguan people, if the Nicaraguan workers justly demand socialism, then they have established that the way to advance in the social revolutionary process in Nicaragua is through a revolutionary power that defends and guarantees a regime of mixed economy and political pluralism. But this is one thing. What the contras have proposed in the negotiations is another thing. They want to change everything.

And can we change everything because the contras ask us to do so? [crowd shouts: "No!"] Should we reform the Constitution because the contras ask us to? [crowd shouts: "No!"] Should we change the name of the Sandinist People's Army because the contras want us to? [crowd shouts: "No!"] Should the Sandinist police no longer be called the Sandinist police because the contras want it? [crowd shouts: "No!"] Must we stop being Sandinists and revolutionaries because the contras demand it? [crowd shouts: "No!"] Who are we going to listen to, the contras or the people? [crowd shouts: "The people, and people's power!"] And that is where the big mistake of the contras and the bourgoise reactionaries here and the CIA newspaper lies. If they think the revolution is willing to discuss with them whether there is going to be a revolution here or a different process, one that is counterrevolutionary, that is not under discussion. What is under discussion is the form, to find the manner for the mercenary forces that are already defeated to be able to surrender their arms, to lay down their arms, to rectify themselves before the people and engage in a normal life, thus ending the war in this country. That is what we want.

How can they think that we are going to discuss whether or not we are going to have a revolutionary process here? That is already decided. That is not under discussion, because that was already decided and confirmed by the people on 19 July 1979 with arms and in November 1984 with votes. [applause] Then I do not know what they are thinking. They should be thankful that we are talking to them. They should be thankful that we are offering them space here in the country. They should be thankful that we are not offering them a guillotine or a firing squad, which is what they deserve. [applause]

Any court in the world who tried these criminals, including the so-called contra Directorate, who try to pretend they are patriots—they are accomplices in the deaths of the Nicaraguan people's children, of the Nicaraguan peasants, and of the Nicaraguan women, and in the kidnappings—any court in the world who tried them... [changes thought] Well, in the United States they would be sent to the electric chair; in any part of the world they would be given a death sentence. The Nicaraguan revolution, which has been so generous, instead of condemning them to death is giving them the opportunity of turning in their weapons, ending the war, and accepting participation in this country's political life. Of course, they must first be convinced that the revolution cannot turn back and that this revolution is giving them an opportunity. It is the revolution that is giving them this oppurtunity. This is not a right they had earned. They had not earned the right to enter Managua. The situation at the end of these talks was that I proposed a date to them. They did not accept it. They said they would look into it. During the meeting we proposed that we meet again in Managua; but now they do not want to meet in Managua. They want to meet outside Nicaragua. The truth is that it is very difficult for us to hold these meetings here in Managua. Once these people leave, we have to disinfect the whole city. [applause] By coincidence Managua has been fumigated since early this morning. [laughter] This is because the Health Ministry coordinated it this way.

These people do not seem to realize that we agreed that they come to Managua after great effort and explanations to the people, simply to avoid more bloodshed, for attaining peace soon. Now they got to Managua, and now they do not want to meet in Managua—not even in Nicaragua. We are not going to hold meetings outside Nicaragua. The meetings have now got to be in Nicaragua, because they, who insisted so much that they be in Nicaragua [words indistinct] they want to move them from one place to another. [applause] These meetings must be in Nicaragua.

We suggested to these people of the Directorate, who describe themselves as very patriotic, that we issue a joint communique suggesting to the Yankee government

that they lift the embargo against Nicaragua. What do you think their reply was, the contra reply? They did not want to sign. Why? Because the contras are an instrument of the Yankees. They continue being a Yankee instrument. They should stop being a Yankee instrument and accept the fact that they have lost this fight, that the power is no longer theirs and will never again be theirs. Somozist guard Bermudez and the others who think like him had better stay in the United States once and for all, rather than return to harm the Nicaraguan people and the Honduran people as well. [applause]

On the peace talks, the important thing is that we had the meeting, but not much was accomplished, because the Yankees were applying pressure so things would not work out. Anyway, it is up to them now, because we have set a deadline of up to 30 May to end offensive operations. Remember that after Esquipulas, we granted a halt in offensive operations as well. Then, after that, as they did not accept them, we continued increasing our military actions against the mercenary forces, until we ended with "Operation Goose." We have proposed 30 more days after 30 May, and they have said no. So far they have said no. Logically, we are not going to wait until 30 May for them to agree. We have to prepare. Because if on 30 May they say no to extending the deadline, or if on 30 May we have not reached an agreement and the deadline is not extended, then what is left to us is to again launch a major military offensive, as we said, against the mercenary forces, compared with which our "Operation Goose" is going to look small. [applause]

Nicaraguan brothers, today, workers day, we have come to reiterate with these combative marches the willpower and determination to defend this revolutionary process. We have come to reiterate by these combative marches the will to defend the workers' and peasants' power in revolutionary Nicaragua. In these popular and combative marches we have reiterated that this is a Sandinist and people's power and that this power cannot be defeated and cannot be vanquished. [applause]

On this 1 May we have come to tell the U.S. Government that today, when the United States is renewing the embargo on Nicaragua, we are renewing and strengthening our anti-imperialist spirit and awareness, our people's awareness, and our Sandinist awareness, and that we care little about Reagan's embargoes because we will not waver in the face of such embargoes. [applause] We do not have a wicked conscience like pseudo-leaders who receive money from the CIA. [applause]

On this 1 May we have come to tell the Central American workers, the Latin American and Caribbean workers, the workers of the developing countries, the workers of the Nonaligned Movement, the U.S. workers, the workers of the socialist community, and the world's workers that nobody surrenders here. [applause] On this 1 May we have come to reiterate our determination to continue producing and to continue fighting.

Viva the Nicaraguan workers! [crowd shouts: "Viva!"] Viva the workers of Latin America and the Caribbean! [crowd shouts: "Viva!"] Viva the U.S. workers! [crowd shouts: "Viva!"] Viva the workers of the world! [crowd shouts: "Viva!"]

Free fatherland [crowd shouts: "Or death!"]

D'Escoto Denies Incursions; Accuses Honduras

PA3004042788 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0308 GMT 30 Apr 88

["Protest note" from Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto Brockman to Honduran Foreign Secretary Carlos Lopez Contreras issued in Managua on 29 April]

[Text] Dear Mr Minister:

Regarding the protest note you sent on 23 April, in which an attempt is made to blame my country's Army for an attack on the Honduran village of Suji and for harassment actions against Awasbila, Pranza, and Rus Rus, I must express my most categorical rejection.

In a communique issued by the Honduran Armed Forces on 23 April, an effort is made to convince others that the UNHCR had confirmed, quote, the dead and wounded, as well as the property damage done by the Sandinist troops, unquote. However, the UNHCR denied this in a note issued on 26 April.

In this note, the UNHCR said that, quote, this office has not been invited to visit affected areas to confirm the alleged existence of dead and wounded people and property damage, unquote.

In this note, the UNHCR also said, quote, the discussion of this report has occurred at a time when our work is particularly successful, unquote, in view of the number of repatriations that have been carried out.

My government feels this situation creates serious suspicion about the obscure intentions behind the baseless accusations mentioned in your note.

In the contacts established with some of the 164 repatriated people who arrived in Nicaragua from Honduras, through the Leimus post, on 26 April, it was understood that the Suji incidents consisted of clashes between the Honduran Army and Yatama forces.

Consequently, there was no participation by my country's Army. Similar confrontations reportedly occurred in Awawas and Awaslala on 19 and 21 April, when the arrest of almost 100 Nicaraguans was reported.

In accordance with the statements obtained, it has been established that the reason for the Yatama attacks is the many abuses and acts of repression and persecution against Nicaraguan citizens of Miskito origin.

According to the reports, your Army's behavior ranges from harassment actions against the drivers who transport the repatriated people and the illegal confiscation of the motors of the launches used in the repatriation to the adoption of repressive and arbitrary measures at refugee camps. These measures even include the use of physical violence against these refugees and the placing of obstacles for the repatriation of youths.

Specific cases that were cited include the following, quote: On 27 January, Otoniel Gomez was murdered by an officer of Honduras' 5th Military Battalion at a place known as Wiswis. On 26 March, a small Indian boat carrying a dead individual to his community of Crin Crin was stopped by Honduran Army members at the Pranza border post. The boat crew members were searched, and the body was disrespected. So far this year Miskito residents have continued to be the targets of searches and pressures carried out by Honduran troops in Waspuck.

Since the second half of March, Honduran troops have repeatedly violated Nicaraguan sovereignty by crossing the border and carrying out arbitrary actions in towns such as Wiwinak. Honduran troops practically prevent the free transit of the communities in the stretch between Asang and Santa Isabel, unquote.

The Nicaraguan Government vigorously and firmly condemns the acts of repression committed against Nicaraguan citizens of Miskito origin and the violations to the country's sovereignty, and calls for the immediate suspension of this intolerable situation.

To find an overall solution to this problem, which involves making voluntary repatriations easier, and preventing these types of complaints resulting in more repression against refugees, the Nicaraguan Government asks the Honduran Government to allow a Nicaraguan Government delegation to conduct an on-site inspection at refugee camps. This visit would be a determinant factor to speed up the repatriation of all Nicaraguan citizens of Miskito origin who are in Honduras.

I take this opportunity to reiterate to your excellency my highest consideration,

[signed] Miguel D'Escoto Brockman, Foreign Minister

Panama

Madrid: 'Agreement' on Noriega Resignation

LD291724 Madrid Domestic Service in Spanish 1700 GMT 29 Apr 88

[Text] Today an agreement was reached on the resignation of Panamanian strongman General Noriega, who would remain for the present in his country, between the head of the Panamanian Armed Forces and the U.S. Government, according to official sources in Washington. The source, who wishes to remain anonymous, said that the agreement is far from ideal—hitherto Washington wanted Noriega to leave Panama.

Noriega Says No Negotiations Held With Kozak

PA0105024588 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0132 GMT 1 May 88

[Excerpt] Panama City, 30 April (ACAN-EFE)—Today General Manuel Antonio Noriega, Panama Defense Forces commander in chief, said that he only greeted the U.S. delegation that visited this country early this week to negotiate his resignation.

The military chief made these statements after speaking at the closing session of the "First International Trade Union Congress of Solidarity With Panama," attended by delegates from 26 countries.

In reference to the U.S. delegation, headed by Michael Kozak, State Department deputy legal adviser, Noriega said "there have been no negotiations; I only said hello to them." [passage omitted]

PRD President Comments

PA2904225688 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 2210 GMT 29 Apr 88

[Text] Panama City, 29 Apr (DPA)—Romulo Escobar Bethancourt, president of the ruling Democratic Revolutionary Party [PRD], has confirmed that General Manuel Antonio Noriega met with Michael Kozak, under secretary of state for hemispheric affairs [title as received], and a U.S. Defense Department colonel this week.

In statements to DPA this afternoon, Escobar Bethancourt said that he participated in these talks and noted that they were held in a "positive climate" on 25 and 26 April.

He also emphasized that it was a meeting "to discuss general aspects and exchange views." He added that this meeting served to establish "that any determination regarding Panama's political problems or pertaining to Gen Noriega must be the result of internal decisions made by Panamanians."

Escobar Bethancourt said that Kozak, in a positive attitude, agreed that "the two governments must iron our their differences, but with mutual respect."

He also noted that certain military problems were discussed. However, he did not give any details.

According to Escobar Bethancourt, the pressures imposed by the Reagan administration to force Noriega to leave the command of the Panama Defense Forces and a possible return of ousted President Eric Arturo Delvalle were not discussed thoroughly at this meeting.

At the end of his statements, the PRD's Escobar Bethancourt emphasized that Noriega and Kozak were very careful at the meeting not to openly broach critical issues, because they are openly known to both parties and are the sole concern of Panamanians.

Noriega Addresses Labor Solidarity Convention

PA0105130388 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 30 Apr 88

[Speech by General Manuel Antonio Noriega, Panama Defense Forces commander in chief, to the closing session of the International Trade Union Solidarity Congress at the Atlapa Convention Center in Panama City—live]

[Text] Gentlemen; friends; brothers of the Panamanian cause; all members present; directors of the principal table, Hector Aleman, Francisco Castaneda, Elias Gonzalez, Julio Bermudez, Companero Ibrahim Zacarias, Domingo Peteca, and Professor Jorge Arturo Reina; to the delegations of Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curacao, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela, Canada, United States, Spain, Russia, and Libya; to the 400 workers concentrated here; to the 400 million workers concentrated here in their leaders, Panama receives you and Panama receives you with love, [applause] receives you with solidarity, and makes of this historic moment, the moment and the hour of Latin America and the world, the hour of the peoples, the hour of not one step backward. [applause]

Those who believed that not one step backward was just rhetoric made their mistake right there. [applause]

Those who continue sleeping on one side of the pillow believing that not one step backward is not a doctrine, also made their mistake here. [sentence as heard] [applause]

Today we are living in the hour of the essential elements of the penetration by the U.S. establishment in its facets of controlling [copar] governments, controlling armed forces, controlling economies and economic sectors, controlling labor organizations, and controlling public opinion sectors among the popular masses. The controlling of governments is in those who surrender themselves, in those who surrender themselves because they belong to the local antiquated and traditional oligarchy, which subjugates the popular forces.

For them at this moment this system of penetration does not meet with great difficulties. These are the docile governments found on the path of imperialism. Normally it is the representatives of those oligarchies who still resist death. Here imperialism does not meet great difficulties in achieving control. Normally it is the diplomatic service with its officials such as the likes of Maisto [U.S. Embassy deputy chief of mission] who are in charge of doing this in cooperation with all the orchestrated international organizations.

That is how, in exchange for that, the stability of its puppet government is seen through all its political and economic support. Meanwhile, the penetration continues until the various power factors, sometimes supported by the government itself and using all the available powerful resources including advertisement, intimidation, and violence... [changes thought] destabilization comes when a government refuses to surrender, and at that time they try to overthrow that government with blows or shaking.

The habit of buying friends is the norm guiding imperialism. That norm guides imperialism, which forgets that Rome does not pay traitors and that 20 centuries ago another imperialism regretted the sad experience of its immoral behavior. This proves that those who act badly finally succumb, because they are victims of those who also act badly.

Similarly, we want to recall a Versailles Palace reception in 1797 when Napoleon returned to Paris after having recovered Italy. He was with a colleague, a splendid French colonel. A young Frenchwoman asked: Colonel, how do you make love? Napoleon and his colleague told her: We do not make love. We buy it ready-made. In that same way, gentlemen, the United States does not make friends, it searches for them and buys them ready-made. [applause] The United States seeks and buys ready-made friends. Those who believe in that friendship will face the same phrase given by Napoleon's collaborator.

We see that the encroachment [copamiento] into the armed forces is framed within the capacity of the operations they carry out. They use the minds of those men, the economic penetration, and flirtation to try to destabilize other countries' armed forces and to try to turn those men against their own homeland through flattery.

The technique used to train its armed forces has always been the same. Yesterday, when in 1969 Omar Torrijos... [changes thought] also the same hand, the same men, and the same names joined to seek an alignment with the armed forces trained to protect the homeland. They wanted to turn those armed forces against their homeland, their sovereignty, and their dignity. The same history repeats itself through time and space. The only difference is in the people's last names.

The encroachment in economic sectors is a well-known measure. Economists, who seek easy and sweet money and who make things difficult for the government, because they are economically aligned with the establishment, which has delivered and continues to deliver money to buy the Latin American peoples' consciences... [changes thought] Encroachment is precisely the desire to neutralize labor union organizations such as the ones that came here with dignity. [applause] It is the desire to

neutralize leaders who know what the homeland means, leaders who represent peasants, workers, and who are an encumbrance for the establishment [preceding word in English]. [applause]

In addition, in the encroachment into peoples sectors, we see how they desperately try to approach the underprivileged to turn them against themselves.

The threats to use force show that the principle has not been ruled out or forgotten. Based on those essential elements, based on those irrefutable facts, we want to expand on what the labor organizations have discussed throughout these days. We want to tell the whole world that Panama is being treated as an experiment, a culture medium, the results of which will be applied in other Latin American countries, maybe next year, maybe in 2, 4, or 6 years. This is true of Panama today. Tomorrow it will be true of Honduras. The day after tomorrow it will be Argentina, and later it could be any other Latin American country because of the experience gained in Panama.

The experiment in Panama also involves the economic sector. Even though other countries do not use the dollar as their currency, the dollar will be precisely the one which strangles their national currency through the subterfuges that have been tested in Panama to obstruct the clearinghouse activities and freeze the deposits in New York and Boston. The Latin American countries, presidents, and governments that timidly watch the Panamanian cause and problem today should know that when their time comes they will be dealt with in the same way.

The political experiment is being tested in Panama. Whenever it [the United States] needs to install a docile government in its own image to guide the flock, it will create a house, an island, a place, a Quarry Heights so that the government may use it as a hideout to attack its own country! All the Latin American countries have their own Quarry Heights, gentlemen! Quarry Heights is a military base. That is where the [U.S. Armed Forces] command is located. That is where they have given shelter to the president that they want to impose on Panama. [shouts, slogans]

Gentlemen, the experiment in the social sector calls for support, encouragement, and aid to the social class that must be imposed on the masses! Imposed on the free people of the world! Imposed as a caste made up of those who lack the support of the middle-sized business sector, workers, labor groups, and labor unions! That is why they are trying to impose the example of the social groups which live throughout 50th Street and Paitilla! [shouts, slogans]

Concerning international affairs, we have seen attempts at conditioning Latin American peoples and countries against one nation. We have seen the visit paid by Vernon Walters—I am going to mention this case because I am acquainted with it—to Argentina when General Galtieri took the Malvinas. He and Alexander Haig traveled at once to Buenos Aires and they threatened Galtieri to stop the Argentine people's liberation struggle. And today that very same individual goes to Argentina to demand that the Argentine Government crush and oppose Panama. And they overthrew Galtieri, and they crushed the hopes of the Argentine people.

In the military sphere we also see the same attempts being made. According to them it shows a lack of education to speak the language of the Panamanian Armed Forces. According to Poindexter, the loftiness, the speed, the tone, the doctrines of a Panamanian Armed Forces captain or lieutenant are a bad example. [applause]

In that military sphere, we feel proud of these armed forces. During a secret visit by friendly officers of other armed forces, they told us: We feel proud of you Panamanians and we bring a message of solidarity to you, but we cannot make it public because they have us by the balls. [applause, slogans]

Gentlemen, it is important that you take this realistic concept and analysis of the Panamanian situation back home with you. This is not exclusively a case of Panama versus the United States. This is a situation of Panama being treated as an experiment, for which Panama is paying the price. Above and beyond that experiment, however, there is the very real urgency to have a new government, one without the popular forces, come to power in Panama in the year 1989; a new government without the desire for liberation, without the thirst for sovereignty, and without the patriotic goal of reaching the year 2000 without the foreign presence; a new government that will appoint a subservient man to the Panama Canal Commission, a man made in the image of the U.S. establishment. [slogans] The attempts to prevent us from getting rid of the colonialist remnants that must be gone in 1989 lead to these attempts at destabilization, the destabilization of a popular force that, as Bermudez [not further identified] said, has taken power and does not want to relinquish it to those forces that are going to destroy it.

These patriotic people have taken over the streets and will never give them up. These people already know where the country's rifles are and already know at whom these rifles must be fired These people have already made a list of their friends and also a list of their enemies. These people do not want to be left out of the dialogue because they are no longer passive participants in their own drama. There can be no dialogue here, either national or international, unless the popular forces negotiate their own security. [applause] This commander is prepared to talk, but with the popular forces, for the destiny of the popular forces, for the benefit of the popular forces. [applause]. If this commander has a price, only the popular forces know what that price is. [applause]

Friends and brothers of America and the entire world who are here today, Panamanians, this historic afternoon is the hour of Panama, of the peoples and workers of the world. [applause] We tell all of the delegates, all the guests, the 400 million men you represent, that as you take back this remembrance of Panama, you are the only ones who have not seen intrusions or soldiers dressed in black, and you have not mistaken palm trees for Panamanian soldiers, [applause] and you have not felt the shots from Panamanian guns firing in the night. You have held your meetings in peace. The only weapon you gentlemen have received is this machete representing the Panamanian people's dignity, representing the courage of the Panamanian people, a machete that says not one step backward. [applause, slogans]

Solis Palma Comments on 'Criminal Aggression'

PA3004023088 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 0018 GMT 30 Apr 88

[Speech by Manuel Solis Palma, minister in charge of the Presidency, at the opening of a lottery agency in Aguadulce district, Cocle Province—live or recorded]

[Text] Agricultural Development Minister Mr Darisnel Espino, National Lottery Director Mrs Ana Villa de Flores, Major Anibal Maylin, chief of Cocle military zone, deputy ministers, honorable legislator and friend Mr Saenz, honorable Representative Osvaldo De Leon, Cocle and Veraguas Provinces governors, honorable representatives, mayors, members of the technical board, ladies and gentlemen:

I believe this is a time of great emotion and importance for me, but it is also very important for the nationalist struggle that the Panamanian people have taken up and are committed to.

Our sovereignty is felt much more strongly in the interior of the country. It is felt more deeply than anywhere else in the nation, because Panamanians living in the interior have taken roots in their land. They want to live in their land, they want to enjoy their homeland and die in it, because there is permanent dignity, courage, and decency in them. [applause]

For that reason, to come to the interior, to come to Aguadulce to this land of hard-working, laboring men is to simply be in the heart of the homeland. Today more than ever it is very important and significant to be in the homeland's heart. [applause]

Panama has been subjected to the most terrible and criminal aggression ever imposed on any people in the history of humanity. Panama has experienced an earthquake, because earthquakes destroy houses, the land cracks open, and there is misery. The United States has started an economic earthquake to try to destroy the Panamanian economy. However, it has been unable to do so because the Panamanian people do not surrender and they have rebelled against the aggression. This is what they do not understand. They do not understand how after 60 days we have survived what they call the cutting of the Panamanian people's jugular. They cannot understand how a nation wounded in that way is able to survive. They cannot understand, because they have never understood men's dignity, much less the Panamanian people's dignity. [applause]

Along with those who are here with me, I have made a solemn commitment with each Panamanian, and we will fulfill this commitment.

This morning I called the head of the Presidency public relations office and one of the presidential advisers and told them: Make a list of everything I committed myself to do for Panama the day I assumed the Presidency. Make a list of everything I said on 1 March at the Legislative Assembly, of what I told the nation on 26 March, of everything I said at last week's news conference, and of what I said yesterday at Atlapa to the representatives of over 400 million workers of the world. I told them: Make this list, and add everything I say, including what I say here today, because everything I tell the Panamanian people that I am going to do is something I am thinking about, it is something that is in my heart, and it is a commitment I cannot avoid, because I will not deceive anyone. [applause]

As you may know, we have found immense difficulties. We had foreseen these difficulties. At the last provincial council I attended, which is the Cocle Province council, I said we would experience many difficulties. I said we had to prepare for them, and, as the then education minister, I warned them that perhaps we would be unable to meet the requests of the various communities, because although they were fair, we would not have the financial resources to fulfill them. I said we were being surrounded to prevent us from fulfilling the needs of the various communities and of Panamanians in general who justly ask us to satisfy their needs.

At the time, I did not know that a few days later I would become the president of Panama and have the responsibility of leading Panama during the most critical and difficult situation it has ever experienced.

I am not, however, saying this to make excuses. I am saying it to state that even amid that crisis the Panamanian people, all of this country's inhabitants, the entire country, with the exception of the few traitors who have blemished their homeland's honor and dignity, are standing up and are willing to take the country forward and to never be either slaves or stars in another nation's flag. We only want Panama. [applause]

Our present situation forces us—it is part of our permanent feelings—to change the direction of our national economy. Our economy must be primarily based on Panamanian agriculture, on the man of the countryside, the man of the interior, because that is where the very roots of our autonomous and independent development

are, without depending on the wretched dollars that have been given to us on many occasions to subdue us and put an end to our status as a free, sovereign, and independent country. [applause]

Acting upon what I am saying, beginning tomorrow we will reestablish the Agriculture Ministry in Veraguas. [applause] The Agricultural Development Bank will grant credits in every place in the countryside where needed, and you will no longer have to travel to Panama City to get them. [applause]

I have been asked that the facility we opened today not only be a National Beneficence Lottery payment office. I know of the dynamism of its director; I know of her permanent drive. [applause] This is why I am sure that I can ask her—because I need not order, it is enough to ask her—I ask her to expand all services to turn this into a lottery branch for Aguadulce and adjacent areas. [applause, crowd shouts: "Long live the president."]

We are seeking financing. We are seeking ways to exchange the checks we are giving you, to give you cash again. We have already made progress in this endeavor. [applause] We are seeking other friendly sources without faltering or surrendering. Those sources are already opening up to Panama. Many countries have begun to help us.

When this began on 26 February, we were left virtually isolated from the world. U.S. pressure, misinterpreted surprise news reports, and constant disinformation left us isolated. We gradually recovered our position among the group of nations. SELA was the first: All Latin American countries expressed their moral support and commitment to effectively help us. Afterward, 77 nonaligned countries also responded to us; they supported Panama. And then 101 Third World countries also supported Panama. Recently, within ECLA, all Latin American countries and countries from other continents expressed support for the Panamanian position. Mexico, Ecuador, Peru, and other countries have already started to define the aid they will channel to the Panamanian people. And we are sure that in a very few days, within the next week, we will have manure, we will have fertilizer, we will have all the goods needed for agriculture to ensure that farmers will have all these things available for cultivation, which will begin next month, because we will grant credit to all of them and help develop agriculture.

We will continue on this path of helping and protecting our people to produce a Panama with freedom and its own development, a Panama that will be a great nation, that will set an example of having fought the most powerful country in the world although it is one of the smallest without surrendering and fighting only with its honor, dignity, and the courage of its people. [applause]

A congress in solidarity with Panama started yesterday. The representatives of more than 400 million workers are participating. What measures will they adopt? Only they know. However, they promised to return to their countries to report the truth.

Everybody who comes to Panama is astonished at not seeing bodies in the streets, at not being kidnapped, at finding peace in the country, at finding a people determined to struggle. The reason for this astonishment is that, according to the disinformation that the United States disseminates throughout the world, between 300 and 400 people die in Panama every day, there is a revolution at every street corner, there is no life in Panama, there is no peace or security in Panama. But everybody who comes to Panama discovers this is untrue. And this discovery acts against the country that speaks of democracy, that speaks of dignity, but that does not respect small nations or the agreements signed with our country.

Gentlemen, I want to tell you this: The government I head will make a radical change in action. When we speak of a return to Torrijism, we mean a permanent consultation, being with the people at all times, taking measures we have discussed with the people, securing the welfare of each individual in accordance with his own thoughts and situation. This government will have to be absolutely honest. Any public official who commits a crime, particularly by taking the state's money, will be removed and put in prison because treason cannot be accepted in this country. [applause]

Let everyone be aware that the sale of diesel fuel, gasoline, and tires belonging to the Public Works Ministry has come to an end. [applause] Let it be known that tractor spares are for those tractors, not to be sold for use in private tractors. [applause] Let it be known that we have to work, that state-owned vehicles cannot be allowed to be driven around or used for picnics. [applause] We have to work because we have made a commitment with the homeland. This should have always been done, but today, more than ever, it is equivalent to high treason not to do so.

We are [words indistinct]. I believe in respecting public officials. I think public posts should also be held by others than those who belong to a political party. I also believe, however, that whoever uses his post to destabilize or hamper the government must be removed because he hampers the government's progress. [applause]

The idea is not to persecute, but let everybody work, both government workers and those who are not, because if he hampers work he is a traitor and we will punish traitors. [applause] We will hold Cabinet Council meetings on Saturdays or Sundays. [applause] On weekdays, we have to work in our offices and visit communities. On weekends, we will work together in drafting plans and implementing them. [applause] The ministers of state, directors of autonomous institutions, and all the

other officials of decentralized agencies must appear at the Presidency tomorrow at 1000, where we will outline working plans and define the guidelines for the economic, social, and political development plans of the government. Within these guidelines, the officials will draft their working plans, which they must submit within 14 days.

These plans will then be reported to the Panamanian people. We will hear their remarks and make the necessary corrections. We will make the necessary corrections as we go. We will not waste our time by making plans and not implementing them. We will make plans and implement them. We will correct our mistakes and forge ahead because there is no time to lose and no turning back. Thank you very much.

Foreign Minister on Situation, Policies
PA2904223188 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 2028 GMT 29 Apr 88

[News conference held by Foreign Minister Jorge Ritter with local and foreign reporters, with Boris Moreno as moderator, at the Atlapa Convention Center in Panama City—live]

[Text] [Ritter] Good afternoon, Messrs journalists. Just a brief introductory statement because I believe the question and answer period will cover the topics that interest you the most. I only want to state that, as a principle, Panama's foreign policy is independent and nonaligned. Panama respects, and demands respect for, the principle of self-determination and nonintervention in other states' internal affairs. Panama hopes that these principles will guide its relations with all countries in the world, with the corresponding good or bad consequences.

Consequently, every time we discuss the current problem in Panama, economic aggression, we refer to the principle that is so dear to all Latin American people. We have found support and solidarity because we share the principles of nonintervention and self-determination. I do not wish to expound on this topic; I only wanted to reassert that this is the basis of our foreign policy. I will not give details about our position concerning the different regions of the world, the power blocs, the Nonaligned Movement—not even about the United States. Please ask your questions, and I trust that you will refer to current events and topics that interest us all.

[Moreno] We ask the journalists to give their names and the media they represent.

[Castillo] Ruben del Castillo, Voice of America. I would like to know: When you talk about maintaining a policy of cooperation with all countries, do you think the new cabinet will have closer relations with nonaligned countries?

[Ritter] Relations with nonaligned countries are as close as they can possibly be. Panama actively participates in all the Nonaligned Movement's activities, conferences, and Coordination Bureau meetings. Panama has found an extraordinary solidarity in the Nonaligned Movement. In fact, I do not think the appointment of a new cabinet—in which President Manuel Solis Palma honored me with the post of foreign minister—alters his willingness, as stated when he was sworn in, to continue to be active in the Nonaligned Movement. Panama has, by definition, a nonaligned foreign policy. The president... [corrects himself] the minister in charge of the Presidency reasserted this when he was sworn in 2 months ago; and Panama has firmly continued with this policy.

[Kam] Fernando Kam, Channel 4. The word solidarity is being constantly mentioned. Nevertheless, upon assuming your post, do you know how many countries have recognized Dr Solis Palma's government?

[Ritter] Look, listing [those countries] is impossible.

[Kam] Why?

[Ritter] Simply because most of the countries maintain the wisest policy, one that is in accordance with international norms, of recognizing countries. There is no specific recognition of a given government. That is the position of most countries, so Panama continues its international relations with all countries, except the United States, which pointedly recognizes a nonexistent government.

[Aguilar] Lloyd Aguilar of AP. Mr Foreign Minister, since yesterday, it has been said in the United States that there is a tentative agreement—as you described it—between the Reagan administration and General Noriega for the latter to leave the post of commander of the Panama Defense Forces [FDP] and remain in the country. First, does this agreement exist or not? Second, if there is such an agreement, is this not similar to the offer Gen Noriega had already made to leave his post prior to May 1989?

[Ritter] There is no such agreement. Mr Kozak has been in Panama, talking with various groups. He has talked with opposition leaders. He has also talked with Gen Noriega, but no agreement has been reached, because they were not negotiating. He came here as part of a round of conversations. Those conversations were held with various groups, and that is all there is to Mr Kozak's visit. Today, the U.S. newspapers have emphasized there is an imminent agreement between the U.S. Government and the Panamanian Government. I repeat: There is no such agreement. I believe the basis of an agreement must be the normalization of relations between our two countries; therefore, no such agreement could be reached until Panama's relations with the United States are at such a point.

[Moreno] Mr George Fisher, an assistant to the foreign minister, will translate for the English-speaking journalists. No, the minister himself will do his own translation.

[Ritter, in English] Mr Kozak was here this week, and he held conversations with Gen Noriega and with other members of the... [corrects himself] and with members of the opposition groups in Panama. No agreement is today in effect. There is no such agreement as has been said in the American media. There were conversations, not negotiations, between Gen Noriega and Mr Kozak; and there were converations between Mr Kozak and opposition leaders in Panama. I believe this is part of a...[changes thought] The American media is now talking about a settlement or an agreement between Gen Noriega and Mr Kozak. They are missing the point. The real issue is that Panama is under an economic aggression; we have our assets frozen in the United States; and there is no possibility at this moment that such an agreement can be reached. The two parties are not negotiating, but they are only holding conversations.

[Reeves] Edward Reeves of THE LOS ANGELES TIMES. Just exactly what was discussed during these conversations between Gen Noriega and Mr Kozak?

[Ritter] I was not present during Mr Kozak's conversations with Gen Noriega, but I get the impression they discussed the Panamanian political situation. [laughter]

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] you are the foreign minister, did not Gen Noriega tell you about the contents?

[Ritter] They talked about the political issues. There are many various political topics in Panama, and I think the central topic in Panama—and I want to emphasize this—continues being the insistence that all conversations are about Gen Noriega. We have much more urgent problems with the United States that seem to be avoided when one talks about the possible retirement or the possible resignation of Gen Noriega. Those same newspapers avoid mentioning the dramatic situation of Panama as a result of the economic aggression. They avoid mentioning the disproportionate U.S. military presence in Panama—a violation of the treaties—and many other topics that are very grave, very serious for the Panamanians, and which have been completely forgotten. They have been hidden behind a agreement that does not exist.

[Meade] George Meade of the Voice of America. Mr Foreign Minister, you have made a distinction between negotiations and conversations. As a matter of fact, you have said there have been conversations and not negotiations. What is missing for raising these to the level of negotiations? [Words indistinct] the points you have just mentioned, do you mean that Mr Kozak was not willing to discuss ending the economic measures and the other issues that are of interest to Panama?

[Ritter] No, no, no. When I told you that we... [changes thought] When I told you there had been conversations, this does not mean that certain topics were not discussed. Every topic was discussed. I think that within the topics that were discussed during the conversations between the U.S. Government representatives and Gen Noriega, the topics had to be complete. [sentence as heard] Now, when are negotiations taking place? I think that can be determined only by the circumstances that are leading to a normalization of relations between our two countries.

[Moreno] Mario Martinez of CRITICA has requested the floor.

[Martinez] Thank you. Mario Martinez of the daily CRITICA. Mr Foreign Minister, I am concerned about something. In this same building a national dialogue is being held between various people's organizations, including an FDP delegation. One of the [dialogue's] resolutions requested that the executive branch possibly sue the U.S. Government at the International Court of Justice [ICJ] at The Hague for damages. Is there any possibility this will occur, Mr Foreign Minister? I have another question: Would you give me your opinion, or the government's analysis, of the statements by the various international organizations, mainly ECLA?

[Ritter] The statements by international organizations have been very rich in expressing solidarity for Panama and in condemning the aggressive policy against our country. Both SELA and the Nonaligned Movement, as well as ECLA, have all said that they condemn the economic measures the United States has imposed on Panama.

The task we now have is to implement those resolutions and to make this solidarity effective, because although the resolutions and the solidarity are a political incentive to Panama in this current struggle, we must also try to make them become a reality, because the country is enduring a very serious economic crisis in which the most needy sectors have been seriously affected.

On the other hand, concerning the national dialogue and the request made to the International Court of Justice on behalf of Panama, I have repeatedly stated that Panama will resort to every option that the international community offers for the defense of nations. Panama recognizes ICJ jurisdiction, and this is an option we are studying, and I believe the recommendation is a very good one. Obviously, we cannot rule it out. We should view the FUP [People's Unity Front] proposal that Panama appeal to the ICJ as a positive one.

[Roberto Cubilla] Mr Minister, I am Roberto Cubilla from Estereo Rey. In view of the economic sanctions the United States has imposed on Panama, is there any possibility of establishing trade and diplomatic relations with the USSR?

[Ritter] Diplomatic relations with the USSR, as well as relations with any other nation, are not linked to a specific political circumstance or time of crisis. I believe each nation assesses in due time its own foreign policy, its needs, and its own style. Diplomatic relations occur when all these elements exist. Establishing diplomatic relations with the USSR will not necessarily occur as a consequence of U.S. aggression.

[De la Hoz] Mr Minister, I am Victor de la Hoz from Radio America. What kind of policy do you intend to implement as foreign minister to obtain the recognition of the Manuel Solis Palma government at international forums?

[Ritter] The point is that at international forums, this is not a task we have, because this is a task that has already been achieved. The OAS recognizes our envoy Roberto Leyton as the Panamanian Government representative. During the 2 months in which Manuel Solis Palma has been performing as chief of state, there has been no challenge at the United Nations—where I had been appointed until the beginning of this week—regarding the legitimacy of the present government's representative at the United Nations. What people should bear in mind, and I want to reiterate this here, is that the United States is the only country that has not recognized this govenment and that has specifically recognized a nonexistent government. The opinion of the majority has more leverage at the international organizations, which in this case is the unanimous opinion of the members that compose the organizations minus one.

[Reporter] Mr Minister, Mr President, Mr Foreign Minister...

[Moreno; interrupting] Excuse me, one moment please; this gentleman had asked first to pose a question. Please do not interrupt through the microphones, and please come to this table.

[Gonzalez] Justino Gonzalez of Onda Popular. It is obvious that Panama is facing a series of illegal actions by the United States against our country. The most recent of those actions was its closing of traffic on the Pan-American Highway in an illegal manner, because this is territory under Panamanian jurisdiction. However, at this level of bilateral relations between Panama and the United States, there are state ministers who still see the possibility of a conciliation with the U.S. Government. Some ministers still think that the result or the end of this situation will be that there are some prospects from the United States toward Panama. [sentence as heard]

Mr Foreign Minister, this contradicts the position maintained by the central government, particularly the Panamanian Foreign Ministry, which has started to eliminate the country's economic and political dependency. I am referring specifically to Minister Mario Rognoni, who even gave us the example of Hiroshima, where a bomb was dropped, but, nevertheless, 40 years later they continue being best friends and allies. I am referring to this specific example. Why is there such a contradiction in the government regarding the diplomatic relations and the level of talks existing between Panama and the United States?

[Ritter] Do you not think there will be contradictions within the government? There are examples of past events that can be presented in a manner that renders them similar or not to the Panamanian case. I do not think this is relevant. Panama's foreign policy is determined by the chief of state with the foreign minister; therefore, you will never find contradictions in the foreign policy of a country, because, I repeat, there is only one minister who is responsible for this. On the other hand, allow me to add that in the case of the commerce minister, I do not think there is even any discrepancy over the way to discuss the problem with the United States. The representatives of the media who are here are the best witnesses that the commerce and industry minister has very outstandingly defended—particularly in the U.S. media—Panama's independence.

There can be differences over methods and formulas within a government, but when the president, who is the head of state, makes a decision and issues a guideline, that is what defines Panama's foreign policy.

[Posada] Jairo Posada of Caracol of Colombia. Mr Minister, several countries have expressed their desire to help Panama economically; however, inside the country we are not aware of any tangible material aid. At this moment, do you know about any such aid?

[Ritter] We are trying to materialize this aid. In a way, it has already been finalized. However, given that the main obstacle we are facing is a lack of dollars—because the United States illegally froze National Bank funds—the materialization of that aid comes about in many forms, and not in only one form, which could be to supply this cash.

In other words, we must first resolve our lack of liquidity in a way that does not include the arrival of dollars and liquidity to Panama. We have finalized very varied forms of aid. However, in keeping with the wish of the countries involved, we have not made public all the aspects of that aid or even the efforts made, because our obtaining that aid could be hampered.

[Robbins] Carla Robbins of U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT of Washington. Mr Foreign Minister, could you tell us whether you have noticed any signs, in conversations between Gen Noriega and Mr Kozak, indicating that the United States is willing to lift economic sanctions against Panama? Also, could you tell us whether you know if Mr Kozak will return to continue these talks, and if so, when?

[Ritter] We do not know if Mr Kozak will return to continue talks; however, as of 15 minutes ago, we have seen no indications that the economic sanctions will be lifted. Moreover, on certain occasions, U.S. spokesmen have specified, have made clear, rather, that the lifting of sanctions, that is, the easing of economic sanctions, does not mean altering them, but ensuring that U.S. citizens who are affected by such measures will not be harmed. The U.S. Government has made this clear on several occasions. Therefore, we have seen no signal indicating that those sanctions have in fact been eased. Of course, we are hoping that those economic sanctions, because they are unjust and because they have hit the Panamanian people so hard, will be promptly lifted.

[Mendoza] Arnulfo Mendoza of Radio Mia. Mr Foreign Minister, Panama is currently facing a crisis because relations with the United States are at their lowest level. Local observers believe Panama is inclined to restructure its foreign policy; that is, it is turning to the left. Also, what is the role of foreign relations professionals within their plan to restructure the Foreign Ministry?

[Ritter] There are no reactions to turn left or right in Panama' foreign policy according to the circumstances. Panama's foreign policy is very consistent; it is basically independent and nonaligned. Therefore, we do not turn left or right according to the circumstances. As for the Foreign Ministry, we are indeed involved in a broad plan to restructure the ministry to make it more efficient and adjust it to the policy that we have chosen to follow. I wish to answer a question to which someone requested a reply in English, but I do not remember the answer [as heard].

[Brito, in English] He can answer the last two questions in reference to: if negotiations with Mr Kozak will be returning, and in reference to the sanctions; and this last one: if you will be turning to the left or right because of the situation. Terry Brito, NBC Newsbrief.

[Ritter, in English] First, with the last question. We do not shift from center to left or center to right because of the sanctions that Panama is taking at this moment. We do not think that our foreign policy depends on what at this moment happening; we are not changing our policy toward other countries because of the economic sanctions and the violations of the canal treaties that are occurring at this moment.

With regard to your other question, I do not know at this moment if Mr Kozak is returning for another round of conversations; I think that is going to depend on what happens from now on; from the questions I have heard, I guess you, some of you, have been advised that there is going to be some kind of suspension of the economic sanctions that the United States has imposed upon Panama, but I think that we have to try to normalize our relations with the United States; but that depends on full commitment by the two countries to respect the sovereignty and dignity of each other and the full compliance of the Panama Canal Treaties.

[Nunez] Daniel Nunez of THE LOS ANGELES TIMES. You said before that there is no agreement; you said this was mentioned in the U.S. media, but no U.S. media has reported any agreement. You said there is a possible agreement based on Gen Noriega's resignation, which will allow him to stay in Panama for at least some time; and that the United States will not pursue him for criminal charges in that country. Can you tell me if there is a possible agreement based on those points?

[Ritter] If I understood correctly, reference was made not only to a possible agreement but to agreements that should be defined. But this subtle differentiation between an agreement and a possible agreement diverts attention away from the country's true problems. This can also work the other way around. Press items can also be read these days stating that the United States is afraid the economic sanctions will probably inflict permanent damage on Panama's economy. I think we could well delete the word possible because the sanctions have already harmed the Panamanian economy beyond recovery.

As for the talks with Mr Michael G. Kozak, I want to say that when negotiations are held between the two countries, it must be based on the two governments' making specific commitments. Mr Kozak came to talk with Gen Noriega, not to negotiate any agreement with Panama. The Panamanian Government has not initiated negotiations with Mr Kozak to normalize relations, which I think is the first step to reach any kind of agreement.

[Molinos] Hernan Molinos of Peru's CAMBIO. I would like to know if there is a full understanding of what the United States means by refining the economic sanctions against Panama. Can Panama, feeling it is being attacked, negotiate on the basis that those sanctions can be refined? Or, on the contrary, does Panama demand the total lifting of these sanctions to reach an understanding?

[Ritter] I do not intend to evade your question, but we need to interpret a word. You speak of refining. I am not sure if you mean to aggravate the measures on Panama even more or to alleviate them.

[Molinos] I mean to alleviate the load. Apparently, they speak of refining the sanctions so as to not harm specific sectors, but this makes these measures selective. If an understanding can be reached on the basis that certain, even if selective, sanctions can be accepted, then Panama would negotiate something it should not accept as a sovereign state. Would this constitute an aggression, half an aggression, or a slight aggression?

[Ritter] As to refining the measures, I want to be very clear: If one refines... [changes thought] They can refine the electric chair, yet it will remain an electric chair. As to alleviating or not alleviating the economic sanctions, they have always refrained from harming U.S. citizens by such sanctions; they do refrain from harming Panama any further. The intent has been to prevent American citizens' getting harmed by the sanctions. For instance, they would be permitted to pay for public services and airport departure fees. The U.S. enterprises operating in Panama that do not pay taxes in the country would be in trouble. This is what the United States intends with any alleviations. I still think the United States does not purposely intend to make the economic sanctions against Panama less onerous, but to make it possible for U.S. enterprises and citizens to stay in Panama.

[Molinos] Thanks, Mr Foreign Minister.

[Gaby] Pat Gaby of the CHICAGO TRIBUNE. Gen Noriega has sometimes stated that U.S. Marines fired against palm trees. U.S. sources said there were Cuban commandos at the U.S. bases lying in wait for the U.S. Marines. It has also been said there were deaths. Maybe this is just a rumor. Anyway, can you tell me something about this?

[Ritter] The U.S. military forces have not even been able to determine if there were any people there, and yet they have already put a nationality on them. According to the reports that the U.S. authorities released and that I have read, they had combed the area but found no indications of human presence there. A top U.S. official said he could not understand how U.S. troops could fire in the same direction for 2 hours without having any indication there were people around. Even up to today, there is no evidence there was even one person there.

But I repeat: Those who are most interested in extending the disagreement between Panama and the United States have begun to find things where there were none. I think this is a lack of consideration toward the U.S. military themselves, who could not see anyone in this area in Panama and yet were told in Washington that they saw Cubans. This is even worse when we consider that those already here said there were no signs of anyone in that area.

[Reporter] [Name indistinct], Quito, Ecuador. There is the impression that there is an attempt to negotiate the consequences of the U.S. measures. However, both the Panamanian Government and the military have charged that the real cause of the attacks against Noriega is the U.S. desire to negotiate its continued military presence in the Panama Canal area. What is the Panamanian position in this regard? Is Panama willing to negotiate that, or is Panama willing to negotiate only the consequences of the U.S. measures and economic sanctions implemented against Panama?

[Ritter] Neither of the two cases lends itself to real negotiation. First, the United States unilaterally imposed economic sanctions against Panama. Those sanctions were not negotiated; the United States imposed them unilaterally, and it behooves the United States to lift them. Concerning the renegotiation of a new treaty, I feel it is evident—it is so evident that there is already in the U.S. Congress a draft submitted by several representatives requesting renegotiation of the treaties and noncompliance with the current ones so new ones may be negotiated.

That is what lies at the bottom of the problem, and Panama has reported it a thousand and one times. Of course, no Panamanian in Panama would go to the extreme of negotiating a new treaty. When I say no Panamanian, I would have to qualify that and say almost no Panamanian would act like that, because we have seen the actions of several Panamanians who have shamed the country by requesting foreign military intervention in Panama. Anyone who would ask for military intervention would obviously also sign a treaty allowing the United States to remain in Panama beyond the year 2000. The popular response has been very clear. I believe the Panamanian people would not tolerate any attempt to negotiate another treaty.

[Rodriguez] Victor Rodriguez of DIALOGO SOCIAL magazine. The firm support of the popular sectors is fundamental to confronting the imperialist aggression. In this regard, progress has been made. However, there is still popular discontent, as shown by the lack of involvement by significant groups. What concrete steps is the government going to take to meet the basic expectations and the incredulity that keep those sectors apart and prevent them from joining the defense against the aggression?

[Ritter] It is not that those sectors are indifferent to the problem. The mere fact they have postponed their lawful demands is in itself a demonstration of respect and shows their political position of rejecting the U.S. aggression.

It would be deplorable for the interests of the nation if those popular sectors began to demand their rights, and thus introduce an element of disunity in the Panamanian scene. I believe, however, that the position of those popular sectors has been very supportive, and they have deferred their demands to the higher interests of the nation.

This happened once before in Panama. The sectors that had been harshly... [changes thought] surrendered their demands to achieve the national unity that led to the signature of the Torrijos-Carter Treaties. Today we are facing an aggression that also calls for national unity, and those who have understood it fully are in fact the popular sectors that have suffered the most.

[Reporter] Mr Foreign Minister, during his speech yesterday before the International Trade Union Meeting of Solidarity With Panama, the president of the Republic

spoke about seeking, from now on, alliances with Latin American countries. On Monday the Mexican papers announced that Mexico would supply Panama with oil, a concrete measure. Does this mean Panamanian policy is going to be reoriented toward seeking Latin American integration, taking advantage of the current crisis, and how is this going to be done?

[Ritter] In my opinion, it is not a matter of reorienting, because Panama has always defended Latin American unity, has given solidarity to other countries, and has received solidarity from other countries. Unfortunately, once again Panama has had to resort to Latin American solidarity because of all the aggressions that have been taking place. But, I repeat, this is not a matter of reorientation, but rather a reaffirmation of Latin American unity, which Panama has always defended.

[Doyle] Alister Doyle of REUTER. What were the conditions proposed by Noriega—if he mentioned any conditions for his withdrawal at all—during his meeting with Kozak? Did he present any conditions in addition to the restablishment of relations...

[Ritter, interrupting] He did not present any conditions, because his withdrawal is not being negotiated.

[Cedeno] Mr Minister...

[Moreno, interrupting] Can you please identify yourself?

[Cedeno] Josefa Cedeno of ULTIMAS NOTICIAS. What will your policy be concerning the Group of Eight? How will you reorganize your ministry as the new foreign affairs minister?

[Ritter] Concerning the Group of Eight, Panama is not participating in its discussions because of the political situation we are experiencing. For us, our full reincorporation into the Group of Eight depends or will depend on the end of our current crisis. Concerning the Foreign Ministry's future reorganization, I can tell you that today I appointed new directors to the main general directorates. They will present a proposal on how to run the ministry's work more efficiently. That proposal should be completed in 1 week; I will not give any details on this issue because it only concerns the ministry, although the guidelines were presented this morning.

[Moreno] The last question please.

[Del Castillo] Ruben Del Castillo of Voice of America. Mr Foreign Minister, you talked about U.S. aggression against Panama, including economic sanctions, the freezing of funds, and especially U.S. nonrecognition of Mr Solis Palma's government. What is the element missing to breaking diplomatic relations between the two countries?

[Ritter] The relations between Panama and the United States are currently very special. We recognize its government, but the United States does not recognize ours. There are no normal channels of communication. That is why under different circumstances, Kozak's arrival to Panama would not have received any particular attention, but today it is top news. You cannot complain, because today I have answered seven questions concerning Mr Kozak, and I was not present at his meeting with Gen Noriega. Kozak's visit to Panama, however, continues being important news, because there are no regular communication channels between the two countries. Relations between the two countries are at their lowest point.

I believe the breaking of relations gives a certain connotation to the conflict that Panama does not want, although the U.S. President said in the law he signed concerning the application of sanctions that Manuel Solis Palma's and Manuel Antonio Noriega's actions seriously threatened U.S. security and its economy. I believe this is one of the greatest lies ever told or written. He is saying that the actions of two men in a country such as ours [words indistinct] the Nonaligned Movement, a country that is smaller than the state of Maine and that is economically strangled by freezing a few million dollars—an amount that can be wasted in any U.S. institution—could really endanger U.S. peace and security.

Panama, however, does not want to reach the extremes of breaking diplomatic relations with a country that has traditionally been a friendly nation. We do not understand... [corrects himself] We understand that we are facing an aggression and a flagrant violation of the Torrijos-Carter Treaties, but breaking diplomatic relations is not yet in the perspective of our decisions.

[Reporter] This is not a question, but a clarification. I will be very short. Please correct me if I am wrong. I think you said that the normalization of relations with the United States is a necessary condition for the negotiations. Could you simultaneously negotiate the normalization of relations, the lifting of economic santions, and Gen Noriega's resignation?

[Ritter] No, no. When we say we are talking with the United States, we must clarify that it imposed the sanctions and is demanding the resignation. Relations are not normal because of the United States, so what is there to negotiate? The three things you said could be negotiated simultaneously are three actions carried out unilaterally by the United States. Therefore, that is not the adequate way toward the normalization of relations. Thank you very much.

Arias Calderon: Noriega Exile Obligatory

PA2904195388 Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish 1748 GMT 29 Apr 88

[By Alistair Doyle]

[Excerpt] Panama City, 29 Apr (REUTER)—Today an opposition leader said that General Manuel Antonio

Noriega will have to resign and go into exile if he wishes to avoid an investigation into alleged drug trafficking and other crimes in Panama.

Ricardo Arias Calderon, leader of the Christian Democratic Party, said that the idea of having Noriega remain in the country after he resigns is like "suggesting that (former Philippine President) (Ferdinand Marcos could have stayed in the country) after being overthrown."

"If Gen Noriega remains in Panama, he will have to face investigation by an independent commission," Arias Calderon told REUTER. "The opposition's demands with regard to an investigation have not changed."

Yesterday in Washington, an official said that the United States was "cautiously optimistic" that Noriega will agree to resign from his post as head of the Panama Defense Forces, following secret meetings held here with a U.S. envoy.

Panamanian military spokesman Martin Paz did not comment on the talks between the country's strongman and Michael Kozak, assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs. Kozak returned to Washington last night. [passage omitted]

On 'Solution'

PA3004230088 Paris AFP in Spanish 2050 GMT 30 Apr 88

[Report by James Aparicio]

[Text] Panama City, 30 Apr (AFP)—Today Panamanian Christian Democratic Party President Ricardo Arias Calderon warned that "the Panamanian people are not going to accept just any solution" agreed upon between the United States and Panamanian strongman General Manuel Antonio Noriega.

Regarding alleged secret agreements between the United States and Noriega, Calderon said that "without the consent of the Panamanian people, no effective solution can exist to get us out of the current disaster."

The opposition leader told AFP that U.S. envoy Michael Kozak, who has been in Panama since Monday, "has not met with the opposition" this time, and he added that "I do not look askance at these negotiations."

Official sources revealed that Kozak had proposed that Noriega retire before 12 August, when the general will complete his fifth year as Defense Forces commander. In exchange, the United States would stay the proceedings against him for drug trafficking.

Arias affirmed that in order for the opposition to accept an agreement, the United States must be aware that "it must be a short-term solution," including Noriega's immediate withdrawal from the Defense Forces, his departure from the country, the formation of a reconstruction government, and the guarantee of U.S. economic aid.

Arias charged that in the last few weeks the country has slid back into "the most crude forms of repression," with 60 opposition members arrested and many homes raided.

Regarding the eventual recognition of Manuel Solis Palma's government by the United States, Arias said the present government "represents the subservience of civilian authority to military power."

Arias proposed a "new government" with the ability to impose civilian authority on military power and that can "reconcile the country in order to democratize it."

"The country cannot be democratized and we will not be able to reconstruct it if Noriega does not leave," said Arias, who affirmed that the United States and the military chief "are not going to resolve Panama's problem."

Arias explained that Noriega should leave the country "for a significant length of time," because "the nation's wounds must heal."

Arias said if Noriega stays in the country after his withdrawal from office, he must be investigated and tried for his presumed ties to drug trafficking, corruption, and election fraud; otherwise "there would be conflict and controversy and we would not emerge from situation we are in.

"There could be no reconciliation between adversaries. It would be as if Marcos stayed in the Philippines trying to recover his power, because all strongmen and dictators are the same in this way; they always lust for power," said Arias.

He said that for Noriega to go into voluntary exile the United States must guarantee that he will not be extradited or kidnapped.

Arias labeled 12 August "unacceptable" as a date for Noriega's departure "because the country can take no more" and "no one believes his promise that he will leave on that date."

Arias protested the "economic aid" the United States gave Gen Noriega's regime in the last few years.

"If the Panamanian people are suffering to free themselves of Noriega and to democratize Panama, they have a right to protest. Noriega is the United States' creature."

He said that as long as Noriega remains in power "there is the danger" that radical groups could "use the historic opportunity" to take power, even violently.

Finally, Arias said he is optimistic that after Noriega's departure the Defense Forces will become subordinate to civilian power, pointing out that they are "being influenced by an experience that is forcing them to change their attitudes and positions."

NOTES